Only Ones Who Know by bumbleebeee_26

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Summary:

WILL BYERS/READER

》An AU!Stranger Things inspired by Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle. Except they play as themselves.

》Set within 1989, Hawkins, Indiana.

》Players include:
- Mike Wheeler
- Jane Hopper
- Lucas Sinclair
- Dustin Henderson

- [Name] [Lastname]

[A/N: I do not own anything, except for the slight changes/slight plot to fit the story.]

1. Chapter 1

Notes for the Chapter:

A/N: First and foremost, all of this will be in third person, and reader is a female. I'm so sorry but you can definitely imagine it as gender neutral!

Secondly, the plot will mostly follow the movie, but I added some changes so it's not repetitive. Also, this is my first time writing from the Stranger Things series, so bear with me!

Enjoy reading!

THE PARTY.

[Name] [Lastname] is in no way a social person. But she likes working with children, especially Holly Wheeler.

Holly likes to talk about her brother Mike, and how although he's distant and mean to her sometimes, she loves him all the same. But most of the time, she loves her older sister, Nancy, more. [Name] never really like to pick favorites, but upon meeting Mike Wheeler for the first time, she sort of understood.

[Name] is the new girl in town of Hawkins, Indiana. Her family came from [country/state], and although the move definitely resulted in

bitterness, she still hopes that things will get better.

It was definitely weird, transferring in junior high, two years away from college. Also scary. She doesn't know these people. She doesn't know what makes them tick, nor what makes them leap. But from observing them through her mother's car everytime she's out, she doesn't want to know.

Before school started, her mother got her into a babysitting job just a couple of houses down. The Wheeler family. She knew them from middle high to high school apparently, and their eldest daughter had long moved out of the house to work, currently living with her long time partner--some guy named Jonathan, she wasn't really listening to her mom.

But Holly is a delight.

She's worked with them for five times just this month, and the second time, Mike Wheeler came storming inside the house in a walkie talkie, screaming his lungs out at somebody on the other line about frogs. Minutes later, he came down from his room, and didn't even bat an eyelash at his sibling.

Fourth time, he came with a girl, but they didn't seem to notice her. She left early before she could meet them both.

Holly would often just shrug her shoulders as they color their own drawings.

"*He's a bit of a girl. He likes to scream a lot.*"

Holly would say, followed by a giggle. She'd just reply with a short chuckle.

Tucking her oversized striped shirt over her high waisted jeans, [Name]'s eyes traveled to the door of her room to see her mother's form leaning by the frame with a small smile.

"Try and make friends, okay? They're good kids."

She gave a playful scoff and an eye roll, "oh, yeah, definitely."

"You just have to get to know Mike better, he's a good kid. And plus, I've met his friends--Lucas, Dustin, Jane and Will. Though personally, I think you'd like Will." Her mother wiggled her eyebrows in a suggestive manner, causing the girl to yell in reprimand.

"Mom! I haven't even seen the guy!"

Thinking about it, both her parents has already met Mike's friends, but she's never even seen them remotely close to where she goes.

Although finding it weird, she blames it all on cosmic fate.

Her mom just waved a hand, "yeah alright. Don't forget Holly's gift, okay? Greet her a happy birthday from me, I gotta go now. Preston just called me, said there's some emergency at the store," her voice's volume decreased as she left the hallway, "dad! Hurry up, [Nickname]'s almost done! You get ready longer than women do!"

The said girl just shook her head as she chuckled, her fingers gingerly fixing the stray strands from her braided hair.

The reason they moved was because her family's business was moved to Hawkins, and although it was a big move, she hoped for the best. The thought made her think of her friends, and all that she left behind. Trying to swallow the bitterness, she breathed deeply, wiggling and shaking her whole body to rid of the nerves.

Well, this is it.

Nodding at herself in the mirror, she headed out her room.

"Alright, honey, game plan, we knock in there, wait for Mrs. Wheeler

and then you give her a hug--"

"No, no, dad, let's--let's not do game plans this time, okay? We just head in there and try to look as normal as we can." [Name] walked alongside her nervous dad, both of them fiddling with themselves in anxiousness.

"Yeah, yeah, no, you're right, we just storm in there and be cool."

"Dad, you're making me nervous..."

"I--I'm sorry honey, your old man isn't good with...parties..."

"It's just a kid's party dad, we'll be fine....I think."

The two shared a glance, before muttering under their breaths at the same time, "well, shit..."

Finally arriving at the Wheeler's porch, the father and daughter started doing rock, paper and scissors to decide on who to knock, until a dark skinned teen walked up the porch, face scrunched in confusion.

"Uh...hello? Mr. [Lastname]?"

"O--oh! Hey, Lucas. You comin' in?"

Lucas glanced at them both before nodding, face still weirded out, "yes, sir."

"Oh right! Lucas, this is my daughter, [Name]." gesturing at the stiff girl beside him, [Name]'s dad watched with an awkward grin as Lucas shakes the girl's hand.

"Nice to meet you, I'm Lucas." He gave an awkward smile back, and the girl nods stiffly.

"Nice to meet you too..."

"Uh--anyways! Let's head in, Lucas, help yourself." Gesturing at the door this time, the girl's dad gave the girl a thumbs up behind Lucas' back, which the girl replied with a shake of her head.

Mrs. Wheeler came out, a wide grin stretching across her face, "you lot made it! Hey, Lucas, Mike's waiting for you at the basement," she stepped aside, "come on in, you two as well! It's nice to see you again, [Father's Name]!"

Lucas gave his greetings before heading off. [Name] gave a grin to the older woman, "[Name]! You get prettier everytime I see you," she gave the girl a gentle and affectionate pat on her cheeks, "well come in! Holly's been asking for you all day. That girl, seriously..."

[Name] flushed at her compliments, but thanked her nonetheless before chuckling at her last statement.

For the most part, everything went alright. [Name] was able to finally meet Nancy and Jonathan, and hung out with Holly and her friends for the rest. She admits it looked pretty sad, but said kids were so sweet and entertaining, so she didn't mind it.

When the cake came out, so did Mike's friends. Some of them looked like they had to be dragged out too, and somehow, she found that funny.

Her eyes scanned their appearances, and her eyes met Jane's--or maybe that's Max? She's unsure, but she gave her a small smile to which she reciprocated. That somehow made her feel better.

The boys were towering over the children, and she sure is with her too, and once again, she stifled a laughter at how awkward they all look.

"Okay, okay, let's start!" Mrs. Wheeler happily announced as everyone started singing happy birthday.

[Name] could not keep her chuckles from coming out past her lips as her eyes scanned the crowd, landing on her father awkwardly singing like the other teens in the room.

Right as her smiling face landed on Mike's friends, her stare landed on a boy with brown hair and bright eyes, his lips also pulled in an amused smile. He almost looked ethereal.

Gulping, she almost jumped in her seat when his eyes caught hers, and her eyes immediately darted away in embarrassment.

Please, bury me six feet under...

Feeling heat rush to her cheeks she avoided anyone's gaze, opting to focus on Holly silently wishing before blowing out her candle.

At around 2pm, [Name] exited the bathroom after washing her hands. The cake residue in her hands now completely gone.

Right as she turned the corner, the same girl from earlier appeared infront of her, and she covered her own mouth to stifle her scream of surprise.

"*Holy shit*! Oh my God!"

The girl was torn between feeling concerned or amused, but she held her shoulder with a grin, "I'm so sorry for scaring you. I swear I didn't mean to!"

[Name] placed a hand on her chest to calm her pounding heart, panting as she inhaled deeply. She started to shake her head as she laughed, "no, no, it's fine. I just didn't expect someone to be standing here like *that*!"

The girl lifted her eyebrow with an amused smile, confused.

"Like *this*!" [Name] did a menacing stance, before bursting in embarrassed laughter. Though to her surprise, the girl laughed way before she did.

"Oh! I am so, so sorry. I really didn't mean to."

"It's okay, just please don't do it again."

The girl smiled with a nod, "I won't, promise. Oh, by the way, I'm Jane. But most people call me El, and you can too."

A lightbulb almost appeared on top of [Name]'s head, "I'm [Name]! It's so nice to meet you, El."

The two shook hands, before somehow bursting into giggles, "it's so nice to finally meet you too. Oh! I better start as to why I came to you."

[Name] tilted her head to the side, a questioning smile on her face, "what is it?" She couldn't help herself from smiling. It's her first female friend in Hawkins, and somehow, it just felt right to know El and be her friend.

"Well, aside from the fact that we really want to meet you, we also kind of found this game, but it needs six players. And as you saw earlier, there's only five of us, so..." El trailed off, her smile turning wide, "we thought that maybe you'd want to play with us? It'd be a good way to get to know each other!"

[Name] doesn't know how but somehow, her smile widened even more, warmth erupting from her chest as she rolled on the heel of her feet, swaying with a grin, "It'd be an honor."

El's face brightened up, and before [Name] could blink, El had her arm around hers and she's being dragged towards the basement, laughter slipping past their lips.

"Be careful, you two! Also, have fun!"

The two heard Mrs. Wheeler happily advised, and the girls replied with a chorus of '*yes's* before disappearing from the hallway.

"What are we playing?" [Name] asked as they finally reached the basement door.

El turned to her with an excited smile, eyes almost twinkling, "*Jumanji*."

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2. Chapter 2

THE GAME.

When El opened the door, [Name] was met with a new type of warmth, and a smell she's not quite a fan of. But like what her mother taught her, *endure*. Releasing a hum as El laughed, she was led down the flight of stairs, a mingle of male voices getting louder. One of the voices that stood above all was Mike, and she had to stifle a laughter at the thought.

"She's here!" El proclaimed, letting go of [Name]'s hand as El shimmied her hands like a magician.

Silence befell the group, and the odd girl out shuffled within her feet as a small and shy smile stretched across her lips, "hello."

The first persom to speak up was a curly haired boy, mouth in a wide grin, "hey! I'm Dustin!" She found his lisp adorable, and watched as he stood up to shake her hand in an eager manner.

"I'm [Name]." She replied with a more confident grin before letting go of his hand. Lucas meanwhile gave a wave.

"Hey, you met me earlier."

She nodded in reply, then her eyes moved the Mike beside Lucas who gave her a nod, "hi, we haven't properly met. Sorry about that."

"It's alright. I understand."

Mike quirked an eyebrow, and the girl almost gulped in nervousness at how intimidating Mike is as he towers over everyone along with...

"I'm Will." The boy from earlier piped up, his face obviously flushed as he held a hand out.

...yeah, Will.

[Name] shyly smiled, her hand sliding across his bigger one, causing a slight burst of butterflies in her stomach and goosebumps to rise on her nape. His bright eyes is almost piercing right through her very own, and she held her breath as they shook hands.

"It's nice to meet you..." blinking, she turned to the rest, "all of you." The rest nodded or smiled in return, reciprocating the phrase.

She finally let go of Will's grasp, and she noticed the boys glancing at each other with a look she can't quite describe. Ignoring it for now, she took the time to glance about, seeing a lot of board games and other...things she can't quite describe. There's also a lot of electronics placed all over the room, intriguing the girl.

El placed herself between the others, excitement overflowing all over her figure as she sat on the arm rest of the couch, right next to Mike. She gave them a look while smiling, and Dustin walked over to the table in the middle of the room as [Name] planted her feet on the ground. She could feel Will standing close, his warmth offering a great sense of security. Lucas followed beside Dustin, the two opening a duffle bag. She took note of how big it is.

"We found this in the storage room at school, asked Mr. Dunkins if it's someone's property but he said it was left there by these group of friends--I don't know, I didn't bother asking for names but I did ask if we could try it out! Looks sick, huh?" Dustin rambled on, pulling out all of the items inside. It consisted of consoles, a game disk and is that a--*monitor?!*

"It looks fairly new too, I wonder why they just left it there. Look, look," Dustin held up the game disk, "Jumanji, see? Now, I wonder what that means."

Lucas rolled his eyes, "dude, just plug everything in."

"Would've been better if you lot started helping, huh?" Dustin sarcastically brought his arms up in an exasperated manner, and Mike stood from where he was, followed by El.

Will released a chuckle, "okay, what do we do?"

Dustin gave a smirk.

For the most part, the boys did most of the setting up, with El and [Name] answering their questions of wether this or that is working. Amidst the bickering of the four when Dustin pulls out the wrong wire or when Mike knocks down a console, El would notice the stolen glances shared between the ones most quiet in the room. When she caught the girl beside her looking at Will again, El held a smirk in her lips, nudging [Name] playfully.

When she turned to her, El wiggled her eyebrows. A laugh broke out from her lips as she watched the poor girl's face flush red, hands waving about.

Mike and Will glance at the two girls, though noticing their voices were hushed, they let it go.

"*El*! I swear it's not like that."

"Uh-huh...hey," El bumped her shoulder against hers lightly, "your secret's safe with me."

[Name] rolled her eyes, "there's no secret. I was just...*looking*."

Although El's teasing makes her flustered, it also makes her buzz with happiness. It's been a while since she's spoken to a female her own age. Leaving her last town had been a huge blow to the stomach, as every night she was left wide awake with tears streaming down her cheeks. She misses everything she's left back at home.

A gentle hand on her arm brought her back to reality, El's worried face the first to greet her, "you okay?"

[Name] inhaled sharply before replying, lips pulling into a smile that did not quite reach her eyes, "yeah, yeah, just zoned out for a bit. Must be the cake." Chuckling, she ripped her gaze away from El and back to the boys who are suddenly cheering.

The brown haired girl beside her just sighed lightly. Even though this is the first time she's met [Name], she could tell the girl has great intentions. She seemed lonely, but it's quite given, due to the fact she's in a new town she doesn't recognize. El knows the feeling quite well.

"Yes! I did it!" Dustin cheered, to which the rest gave him a disapproving look.

"What the hell do you mean? Do we look like props to you?" Lucas rebuked and Dustin waved a hand off.

Mike just shook his head while Will took a few steps back to gaze at their masterpiece. El and [Name] also took time to admire the work they did, their lips displaying a proud smile.

Dustin clapped his hands, and everyone walked closer and huddled together, holding their breaths.

"So..." Mike looked at the rest, "should we start?"

Will gave him a look, sarcastically replying, "I don't know, should we?"

El and [Name] snorted.

"Do the honors then, our lady guest!" Dustin announced, bowing with an arm stretched out towards [Name] who's eyebrows shot up in surprise.

"Me?" She blinked as everyone agreed, her eyes searching for El's who gave her a smile. Will also gave her a nod when their eyes connected, to which she nodded back, "oh, okay, but how do I start it?"

"Just click this button." Lucas pointed at a black button at the DVD, where the game disk is already inserted in.

Shrugging, she didn't hesitate to press the button, causing the machine to spark to life. Everyone watched in wonder as the screen

lit up, the title screen displaying in bold and colorful letters.

Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle

Start Settings

Everyone released a noise of amazement. This is [Name]'s first time playing a video game, in all honestly. She used to visit the arcade back in her town, but she never really had the courage to play one. She likes watching others play.

"Well, everyone grab your consoles!"

Everyone followed Dustin's instruction, reaching for the console that's aligned in front of them. Will is excitedly buzzing beside [Name], which turned contagious as everyone gave each other excited looks.

"To honor a new friend," Dustin started and everyone's noises died down as they listened, "you can pick your character first!"

[Name]'s face lit up, glancing back and forth between El and Dustin, to which El giggled at, "okay! I'd love that."

She walked up closer to the monitor, clicking on the console for start. Everyone exchanged excited looks as the screen transitioned to a player display option. There are six characters in total, and right in accordance to the number of consoles. Her [eye color] eyes scanned the names of the characters, and noises started to erupt behind her as Mike and Lucas fought for Bravestone.

Dr. Xander Bravestone, strong, confident archaeologist and explorer.

Tap to play.

Franklin Finbar, zoologist and weapons carrier.

Tap to play.

Professor Shelly Oberon, curvy cartographer and expert in many scientific fields.

Tap to play.

Jefferson "Seaplane" McDonough, aircraft pilot.

Tap to play.

Ming Fleetfoot, expert of burglary, pick-pocketing, and lock picking.

Tap to play.

Ruby Roundhouse, killer of men.

Tap to play.

Her eyebrows shot up at the description, a chuckle coming out of her lips, "well, okay..." she mumbled and shrugged before clicking tap to play. She glanced at El who just nodded in encouragement. Inhaling, she turned to the bickering boys, "done." She walked away just as Mike stepped forward, who was then pushed by Lucas and Dustin as they argued.

"I get Bravestone!"

"No! I already called dibs!"

"What's a cartographer?" Dustin called out amidst the argument.

The two were busy fighting, which led to Dustin and Will walking past to choose theirs. When [Name] saw Will's mischievous smile, she already knew what character he'll pick.

Dustin meanwhile is whistling, "curvy, huh?" Chuckling, Will gave him a look, "anyways, I'll stay true to my roots, though I don't know what the hell a cartographer is." With that, he clicked Shelly.

Will chuckled lowly, before clicking on Bravestone, he was just silent as he stepped back next to [Name] who's eyebrows are raised with a silly smile on her face, "oh no, mister..." the two shared a laugh.

El meanwhile, is torn between Franklin and Ming, eyebrows scrunched up, "zoologist sounds so interesting but I want to see how pick locking works." Glancing back at [Name], the two shared a shrug as El clicked on Ming.

Lucas and Mike remained fighting until El reprimanded the two to just pick a character. When they saw that Bravestone was already chosen, the two released a loud cry of protest.

"What the *hell*, Will?!"

"I thought you were my friend!" Mike cried out as Will laughed at their suffering.

"You guys took too long. We didn't have time."

Mike released a growl before turning to the screen, "whatever, I'll just get Seaplane."

But Lucas also wanted Seaplane apparently, and they were back into fighting again, but this time, they tried pulling each other's consoles away, until Lucas accidentally randomly clicked a button in Mike's console.

"What the hell did you do?!"

Everyone turned to the screen, and Seaplane was picked for Mike's console, to which Lucas cursed out.

"Are you *fucking* kidding me?!"

"In your face, dickhead!"

"Fuck off!"

The other four just watched in amusement as Lucas sulked in bitterness, with Mike laughing right in his face. Dustin looked annoyed at their bickering, causing him to shout at them to just start the game. El facepalmed while Will and [Name] just exchanged sheepish looks.

The screen transitioned to a new display right after Lucas clicked on Franklin. They once again huddled together, watching.

ARE YOU READY TO PLAY?

YES NO

"What the? Of course we're ready to play." Lucas complained before clicking start.

The six waited, until a loud banging of some sort started playing. It didn't seem to come from the game, but more like it's surrounding them. Sudden fear spiked in the room, and Mike pulled El closer as everyone started looking around.

"What the hell is going on?!"

Dustin screamed right next to [Name]'s ear, to which she looked at him annoyed. The group huddled in a close circle and Will's body

somehow shielded the girl, though it remained unnoticed by her.

But suddenly, a gasp escaped her lips, and she shakily murmured, "Will...?"

The group slowly turned to [Name], who's face displayed fear as she tentatively took a few steps backwards. Her lips quivered as her eyes glossed over.

The tips of her fingers are slowly dissolving, and the rest watched in fear and shock as her whole body dissolved into particles that leads straight to the DVD of the game. It's like in movies, and they almost couldn't believe it's real, but it is, and it's taking [Name] into an item that's void of life.

"[*Name*]!" El screamed along with Will as the two shuffled to the girl, but before they could reach her, she disappeared straight into nothingness.

The whole thing was followed by Dustin's loud screech, fingers dissolving the same way [Name] did. Everyone has now started to panic, because they could see their own selves disappearing the same way the first girl did. El reached out for Mike, but she was way far gone to fully grasp his hand.

"El!"

Everything was a blur after that as Lucas watched as everyone slowly

dissolved into particles that led straight to the DVD, to which he followed right after.

3. Chapter 3

THE JUNGLE.

The first thing [Name] felt is her heart somehow dropping to her stomach. The wind is so loud and is harshly slapping her across her face, with her mouth open as a scream echoed out in the open.

She's *falling.*

Oh God, she's falling down, and *fast.*

"*Help!"*

She thought she's dead--slammed across the ground like a pancake. But within a heartbeat, her feet is planted firmly on the ground, and the ground almost broke at the sheer impact. For some reason, she didn't sway nor fall on her ass, and instead she landed in an almost crouched position with her legs bent and her hands held out in front of her in steadying manner.

Panting heavily, her eyes slowly roamed the new environment, the unfamiliarity and heat clinging unto her core like a snake. There was so much green, so much insects and strange noises she does not even want to know what.

"What...the...*fu--*"

"*Ahh!*" A familiar scream echoed just above her, and [Name] watched confused as something akin to the size of an ant started getting bigger from across the sky.

Is that...?

"EL!" She screamed along with the falling girl as El fell on a large leaf, bouncing off into the ground with her hands shielding her face.

"El!" She stumbled towards the fallen and panting girl, who remained unmoving on the ground. The ground was somewhat wet, and there were things crawling along the ground that she definitely did not want anywhere near her.

"[Name]...?" El's raspy voice reached her ears, and [Name] released a light and shocked laugh as she helped the girl up.

"*Oh my God...I thought you were dead*!" The two chorused, before pulling each other into a relieved embrace. The two immediately pulled away though as they heard two pairs of screams and screeching coming from the sky. El and [Name] watched as the tiny forms of Will and Dustin started getting bigger, until Dustin got caught in a branch whilst Will continued falling in front of them.

"*Mother of God!*"

"Will!"

"Dustin!"

The two headed towards Will, who is loudly panting as he tried to slap away the little branches that clung on his clothes and hair. They could hear him gagging as he frantically cleaned himself off of insects and dirt.

When El figured that he's fine, she glanced up at Dustin, who is still hanging and frantically screeching, "help me!" His body is swaying side to side as he flailed his arms around, causing the branch he's hanging from to creak, with pieces of it snapping in half.

"I'll catch you!" El shouted, putting her arms up with a smile, but Dustin screamed louder.

"*Absolutely* not!"

[Name] meanwhile is helping Will pick off the leaves and sticks stuck in his clothes and hair. Her eyes almost popped out of their sockets upon seeing Will's different clothing, "what the--"

With all the ruckus, the four didn't notice Mike and Lucas screaming as they too realized they're falling. The only difference is that they managed to grab ahold of each other mid-air, and are still struggling

to grasp each other's arm so they won't fly off.

By mere coincidence, Dustin fell the same time that Lucas and Mike did, and somehow also in the same manner. Dustin fell on El, who released a grunt while Mike fell on Lucas, who screamed in pain.

"*Get off*!" El screamed as she pushed Dustin off, who then started to pay his thanks to whoever he's mumbling about whilst bowing. El groaned in pain as she stretched her muscles, and only then did she notice Mike and Lucas pushing away from each other, gagging.

"For such a lanky piece of of shit, you are goddamm heavy!" Lucas pushed Mike off who started screaming for El. The two ran to each other, embracing as they panted both in exhaustion and relief.

[Name] and Will were just watching the whole time, amused and sort of pitying the rest. They gave each a glance, and [Name] helped the boy stand up as he then started to dust himself.

"I thought I lost you..." Mike whispered to El who hugged him tighter.

"I thought I'd lose myself too at how *heavy Dustin was*!" El angrily looked at the said boy, who is sitting on the ground, relishing in the safety of land. His eyes snapped open at her statement, annoyed.

"Wha--? Don't blame me when *you* said you'd catch *me*!" He pointed at himself, before angrily standing up. Before El retorts back, Dustin screams and throws what was once in his face, thinking it was some

sort of insect, "there's something on my face!" He continuously screams, but when he noticed he couldn't see, he started screaming and panicking about something else entirely.

Mike walked over to him and picked up the glasses he threw on the floor.

"I can't see! Help! Help!"

"It's prescription glasses, you nimrod!" He angrily pushes the item in Dustin's palm, who finally stops screaming his head off.

"*Oh*, oh, my glasses..."

[Name] frowns, "correct me if I'm wrong, but...I'm pretty sure Dustin didn't have glasses from earlier..." she trails off, eyes glancing at everyone as they too started to realize, their heads turning to Dustin who now has silver rimmed glasses sitting atop his nose.

"You look extra geeky." Will states as Dustin looks at him with his mouth agape.

"Not only does that offend the crap out of me, but it also reminded me of the fact that *this shit said curvy cartographer--and yet, look at me!*" Dustin shouted as he gestured at his body, "is this game fucking with me or what?!"

"You're not even big, what are you shouting about?" El retorts.

Lucas then made a noise, and everyone's attention turned to him as he looked as though he's scratching himself, "what am I wearing?! *Ahh*! What's that on my back?! What's that on my back?!" He tried to push off the object that's settled on his back, and Will released a funny laugh that [Name] gave him a reprimanding look for.

"Lucas, calm down, it's just a backpack." She gently calmed the panicking boy down, while his friends are stifling laughter.

"*What's that on my back?! What's that on my back?!"* Dustin wheezed as he mocked the now fuming Lucas, who in turn started mocking him back.

"*There's something on my face! There's something on my face!*"

"Okay, that's enough, both of you! Let's all just calm down, okay?! Inhale and exhale with me. Inhale, exhale..." El started to breathe in and out, to which everyone followed.

But then El stopped chanting and pointed at Will, "Wait a moment, Will, were you wearing those clothes earlier?!"

By then, everyone started pointing at one another, taking note of the different articles of clothing adorning their body. El looked the most excited, twirling around as she laughs at her black coat. [Name]

meanwhile is grumbling in annoyance.

"Who wears this in a jungle?! Like--*see*?!" She slaps a hand on her exposed thigh, missing the mosquito which flew away. She scratched the said leg, glaring at a laughing Dustin, who immediately shut up.

"I'd give you my shirt but..." Will glanced down at his one layered button-up shirt, and everyone could see the top part of his chest because of the undone buttons. Will slowly and awkwardly buttoned up the three buttons, shy. [Name] and Lucas cleared their throats while El released quiet laughter.

"It's fine, Will, but thank you," [Name] smiled reassuringly at him as he flushed, nodding. She returned her gaze back at everyone, face solemn, "I think it's about time we address the elephant in the room..." Looking around them, [Name] continued, "*where* the hell are we?"

Cue everyone panicking again, all spitting theories back and forth as they argued because apparently the other is so stupid it's almost unbelievable.

"What the *fuck* do you mean we're in the Amazon?!"

"I don't know! Why won't you think so?!"

"Guys, I think we're in the game!" Will piped up, which everyone ignored as they continued arguing. El and [Name] are telling the

three to quit it, and Dustin is now spouting about aliens and Area 51.

"Wait, Will, that sounds about right!" [Name] looked back to him with wide eyes, before shouting, "guys, we're inside the game!"

"*What*?!" Everyone chorused. And El pulled a hand to her mouth, realization hitting her like a truck. Mike and Lucas has their mouths agape while Dustin continued talking about alternate universes.

"That's right...I mean, we did get sucked inside the DVD. There's no other way to explain it!" Mike rambled, and everyone agreed.

"But how are we gonna get out?" El asked, worried. Hopper is probably worried sick. She did say she'll be home by 7pm--obviously accompanied by Mike.

"*Oh no,* it's not just gonna be my parents--Max is going to kill me! I was supposed to call her twenty minutes ago!"

"Speak for yourself! Will's mom is gonna put out missing papers by midnight! And my mom's gonna be all over the place!" Dustin cried out, rubbing his face as he groaned.

"Okay, okay! Let's calm down! We can't think clearly when we're panicking," Will spoke up, walking in the middle of the group, "if we're in the game, obviously, we have to play."

"Okay, but we don't even know how to play this." [Name] states while she holds a hand out to gesture towards the area. She then hugs her body, the tight fabric making her uncomfortable.

Dustin suddenly screams again, and this time El complains, "you're gonma burst my eardrums, Dustin!"

"My mom's gonna kill me! I have a tattoo!" He brought his wrist up, but the rest didn't see anything, to which Lucas said out loud for everyone.

"There's nothing there."

But El also gasps, "oh no! Me too! I'm so dead." She stomps her feet in anger, face scrunched as she tried to wipe the thing off her wrist, but somehow, it disappears when she turns it to the side. She frowns.

"*...sometimes*."

Suddenly, heavy footsteps started to shake the ground, and everyone huddled together in fear as Dustin shakily asks what it was. El clung to Mike, who held her closer while Lucas tried to squeeze himself inbetween the two pair--thinking they'll protect him. [Name] and Will were next to each other, the latter pulling a hand up to shield her as they waited for whatever it was. Everyone was holding their breaths.

A scream rips out of everyone's mouth when a huge mammal came

out from the large leaves, dripping wet. A roar left it's huge mouth, and everyone is now clinging to each other, watching as the large mammal stomped its foot. The ground shook from the force, and Dustin slipped because of it and the muddy land.

Their eyes widened as Dustin slipped straight to the mammal's open mouth, chomping Dustin whole before swimming away on the nearest body of water. It all happened so fast that they froze for a moment. There was only silence after that, before they all screamed again.

"*DUSTIN*!"

"Is he dead?!" Mike screamed and El slapped him while shouting a '*what the hell do you think*?!'

El and Lucas started crying as Will stood frozen with his mouth open, astounded and in shock. That did not just happen...*did it*?

A loud technical ding came from the sky, and everyone stopped moving when they hear Dustin's terrified scream. [Name] almost doubled over at what she saw and is now seeing. *How is that possible*?! Dustin was eaten whole by a hippo! There was no way of surviving that!

Dustin fell face first on the ground, the impact causing pain to erupt in his face. Sitting up, he groaned loudly as everyone started running to him.

"I'm *alive*!"

"How are you alive?!" Lucas screamed as he pulled the boy up, shocked as he shook Dustin. El is crying while also laughing in disbelief, while Mike sat on the ground, mouth open as he watched Dustin--who was eaten alive, now well and screaming his head off like a chicken again.

Will shakily brought Dustin's glasses to him, gulping as he spoke lowly, "holy crap...you just fell from the sky after getting eaten!"

"Yeah! I got eaten a *fuckin' rhino*!" Dustin shouts, patting himself to check if he's really alive. Lucas then gave him a dubious look.

"That," he breathlessly started, "was a freaking hippopotamus! They're as fast as a horse over short distances and they have the bite force of 8100 newtons," he rambled and everyone gave him a surprised look, which he mirrored, "how the hell do I know this?!"

"Y--you're a zoologist!" [Name] shouts as she stumbles towards them, "that's what your character's description was!"

"Holy shit, that's fuckin' cool!" Mike laughs in disbelief.

"*Are we just gonna ignore the fact he fell from the sky after being eaten by a hippo*?!" El angrily states as she points at an amazed Dustin, who's watching his wrist while turning it from side to side.

"Guys, my tattoo lost one line!"

Everyone checked theirs, but they all still have three lines. Suddenly, it all clicked in Will's head.

"It's our lives." He states flatly, face still trying to register the information. [Name] scrunched her eyebrows in confusion, before her mouth turns into an 'o', realization finally reaching her. The rest also soaked the new information in and Mike soon spoke up.

"Three lives. We have three lives, which is why Dustin," he points to the boy mentioned, "only has two lines now...holy jabebooz, that is *so* cool."

"Wait, *what*?!" Dustin shouts.

Notes for the Chapter:

A/N: Everyone's attires are the same as the film's, except for Reader whose cropped tank top is a full on shirt with short sleeves. I hope you guys liked this chapter as much as I did!

4. Chapter 4

THE QUEST TO SAVE JUMANJI.

"Okay, okay, woah, woah, let's just calm down, *again,* alright?" [Name] starts as Dustin keeps on rambling about his lost life. Will and Mike were excitedly talking about the game mechanics while Lucas and El rambled on with Dustin.

It's understandable, yes, but they have to be level headed before continuing forward. Placing a hand on Dustin's shoulder, she continues, "okay, obviously we have to be more careful, Dustin already lost a life, we don't know what might happen if he loses one more--"

"I'm not *dying again*!" The boy fearfully shouts as he stands up, stumbling back in the same place he was eaten by hippo mere minutes ago. Will drags him back to where they are.

"Yes, we know and we won't let that happen. We have your back, Dustin." El comforts the terrified curly haired, before she turns back to [Name].

"What do we do?"

Will speaks up from beside [Name], "well, for starters--"

But before he could even start with his sentence, the hippo from earlier finally came back, although this time it came with a horde of angry territorial hippos. Lucas is the first to relesse a shout, and before everyone could blink, Will is already running in front of them.

"Will, you *asshole*!" Lucas follows and so did the rest. Surprisingly, despite being the last to move, [Name] managed to outrun him, his eyes wide mirroring hers in a confused manner. How the heck was she able to run faster than him?!

"*Run faster*!" [Name] shouts at Dustin and Lucas who are a bit behind.

Will almost stumbles as he finally came out of the jungle, and a large view of hilltops and green fields met his wide eyes. He turns around, confused, before being met with Mike and El running with their hands together, and a scream leaving past their open mouth.

"What are you standing around like an idiot for?! *Run*!" Mike shouts, and [Name] finally emerges from the shadows, running as well. Her eyes went wide as she comes to a halt, and Will follows her eyes.

A vehicle is driving straight at them, and the four ignores Dustin and Lucas' screaming and instead watches as the vehicle comes to a halt. A man in an explorer hat is grinning at them, joyous, "Dr. Bravestone!" He greets Will, who looks confused, "welcome to **Jumanji**!"

Mike breathlessly lets out, "who the *hell*--"

"Well, what are you just standing there for? Get in!" The man gestures everyone to get inside the car, when Dustin and Lucas suddenly pushes through the first four, slamming the back of the man's seat, as they panted.

"Go, go, go!"

Mike and El follows, and since the vehicle isn't capable of holding all of them, El settles on Mike's lap, "Dustin! We won't fit! Sit on Lucas' lap!" She advises the boy who looks disgusted.

"*Hell* no!"

"Just do it!" Mike shouts, watching the remaining two run to the vehicle.

The two boys gags as Dustin sits on Lucas' lap, and [Name] settles next to them while Will sits on the passenger seat. The vehicle immediately drives away, and everyone watches in bated breath as the hippos stops, roaring at the food that managed to escape them.

Will jumps in his seat when the man beside him speaks enthusiastically, "Dr. Bravestone. Famed archaeologist and international explorer. Known across the seven continents for your

courageous exploits."

[Name] is seen patting the seat in her back, seemingly looking for something, "Is there a seat belt?" Everyone except the man gives her an incredulous look.

But the man continues before they are able to speak, "I can't tell you what an honor it is to finally meet you. And I'm not embarrassed to say you're even more dashing in person." The man gives Will a smile that he raises his eyebrows at, surprised.

"Thanks...?" He splutters out in awkwardness and embarrassment.

"Uh--I'm sorry, who are you?" [Name] finally speaks to him, confusion written across her features as she struggles in between the pairs beside her.

"Nigel Billingsly at your service," he answer happily, glancing at the girl who stutters out a *'watch the road please!*' "Ruby Roundhouse, killer of men. Welcome to Jumanji. I've been so anxious for your arrival."

"*O*kay...?"

"As you know, Jumanji is in grave danger. We're counting on the six of you to lift the curse." Nigel says with a grim expression plastered on his face, and Will releases a short shout when the vehicle bumped on something.

"Wait. Curse? What *curse*?" Dustin asks fearfully in Lucas' lap, who is pushing him farther from him with a disgusted expression, "*stop*! I'm gonna fall, asshole!"

Nigel ignores his last statement as he glances at Dustin, "Professor Sheldon Oberon. Welcome to Jumanji. Nigel Billingsly at your service. I've been so anxious for your arrival." He recites like a soldier in the same tone and manner that he did with [Name]. Everyone gives him a weirded out look.

"What's with this guy?" El asks.

"I think he's an NPC." Mike answers for her, grunting when the vehicle swerved sideways.

"A what?"

"A non-player character. He's part of the game. So anything we ask him, he only has his programmed series of responses." Will replies for Mike, and El releases a hum of understanding.

"*Sick.*" Lucas laughs lightly.

"Franklin Mouse Finbar. Welcome to Jumanji." Nigel pipes up again after Lucas.

"It's Moose. It's not Mouse."

"No, good sir. I'm quite sure it's Mouse."

"Mouse?" Lucas almost looks offended as he asks, and Will releases an amused noise.

"A nickname given for your diminutive stature and adorable manner," Nigel chuckles as Lucas releases a high *'what*?!', "I knew you'd be here. Dr. Bravestone doesn't go anywhere without his trusty sidekick."

Everyone's mouth goes agape.

"Oh? Sidekick?" Lucas' reply is sarcastic, and if only Dustin wasn't on top of him, he would've smacked Will's amused smile on his face.

"Yes. Ever since Dr. Bravestone rescued you from the clutches of a warlord in the jungles of Peru, you've never left his side." Nigel finishes with a smile, and everyone stifles their laughter while Lucas silently fumes.

"Okay, well where are we going?" El asks Nigel, who's expression lightens up.

"Miss Ming Fleetfoot. Welcome to Jumanji. I've been anxious for you arrival."

El sighs, annoyed, "oh, *great*."

Nigel then perks up again when Mike released a loud laugh, finding the whole thing hilarious as he clutched El closely so she won't fall. But his face drops when Nigel speaks up again with his same robotic greeting.

"Jefferson "Seaplane" McDonough, our very own aircraft pilot, welcome to Jumanji. I've been anxious for you arrival--"

"Yes, yes, we know, now let's head back to that thing? Um, *curse*? What does that mean, Nigel?" Will speaks up finally, his head hurting from all the information.

"It's all documented in the letter I sent you, Dr. Bravestone. Perhaps you should read it aloud."

Will frowns as he glances at his friends at the back of the vehicle, who mirrors his confusion, "I don't have a let...ter," he puts his hands up, seeing a white envelope settled in between his thumb and four fingers. He gulps, "...right."

Will inhales, before shrugging and reading the letter out loud, "Dr. Bravestone, I am writing to you regarding the desperate situation in Jumanji. We need your help at once." Everyone started freaking out

when his voice is replaced by Nigel's, along with the sudden change of scenery that they can't quite put a fimger on or how to explain.

"Guys? What the heck is happening?!" El asks as she grips Mike's hand which she can't even see for some reason.

"What the hell is going on?!" Lucas exclaims after her, struggling in his seat causing Dustin to hit him accidentally, "*ow*!"

"I think it's a cut scene. A lot of games and movies have them," Mike explains, "it's like a little movie to tell you the back-story." Everyone releases a noise of amazement.

"My name is Nigel Billingsly Jumanji field guide. I was hired by your former partner now nemesis, Professor Russel Van Pelt to lead a fateful expedition," The cut scene shows an old looking man who is leading a whole lot of people, they're in an expidition--in a mountain of some sort.

"You see, Professor Van Pelt had come in search of the fabled Jaguar Shrine resting place of the sacred jewel of Jumanji," a mountain statue od a jaguar is shown, and a bright gem sits atop of its head. [Name] releases a gasp at its beauty.

"As you know better than anyone, the jewel was his great obsession. And after years of research, he believed that he had discovered its whereabouts," the next scene shows Van Pelt, wonder in his face as him and his accomplices admire the great statue of a jaguar.

"*Could it be? Have I finally found it*?" Van Pelt speaks, a smile forming in his lips.

"Van Pelt told me that he wanted to find the jewel in order to document it in his writings,"

"*It's real*!" Van Pelt screams in joy as he holds the jewel up, the light reflecting on the surface of the bright gem.

"What I did not know was that he intended to take the jewel for himself,"

"*I found it. I found it*!"

"Legend tells that the Jaguar watches over Jumanji and anyone who dares to blind him will be consumed by a dark power. Van Pelt assumed dominion over all of Jumanji's creatures possessing them, controlling them," Van Pelt is shown being followed by rats, scorpions and many more animals as his eyes displayed pure evil, corrupted by greed and power, "and a terrible curse befell this once-placid land. I begged him to put it back, but once he had it in his grasp he could never let it go."

They could see Nigel in the cutscene, obviously planning something as night befell their camp.

"So I waited till they slept that night, and I made my move." The last

scene after Nigel was able to grab the jewel, hiding it with him as he disappeared within the shadows of the shadows--was Van Pelt angrily storming out his camp, his associates with him.

"*Bring me that jewel! And slaughter anyone who tries to stop you*."

Everyone watched, holding their breathes as the scene faded back to where they are, and El released a loud '*wow*!' before Nigel turned to everyone, then at Will.

"Right, then. Here you go," the sudden change in tone brings everyone back to reality, releasing their breaths after such intensity. *That was like a whole movie!*

Nigel then continues, "With the invaluable help of your associates you must use your complementary skills to return the jewel to the Jaguar's eye and lift the curse," Nigel brings out said jewel and Dustin curses outloud in amazement as he stares at the jewel.

"Son of a bitch! Look at that thing!"

"I'm sure you'll want to get started right away. Actually, I think..." Nigel looks away, thinking, before then giving the jewel to Will who almost didn't want to touch it because of the whole blinded by power thing, "anyways, good luck! The fate of Jumanji is in your hands."

Well, that's one hell of a burden to carry. [Name] thinks.

The vehicle stops, and everyone gets out. Dustin and El stretched while Lucas brushed himself off of Dustin's dirt. [Name] is deep in thought which Will gave her a comforting hand in her shoulder. She gave him a smile of thanks.

"And remember, the goal for you, I'll recite in verse;

Return the jewel and lift the curse,
If you wish to leave the game,
you must save Jumanji,
and call out its name.

Good luck! The fate of Jumanji is in your hands."

Everyone nods. But Nigel pipes up again.

"And remember--!"

"He's saying the same thing over." El notes out as everyone watches the broken NPC.

"I'll recite in verse;

Return the jewel and lift the curse.
If you wish to leave the game,
you must save Jumanji,
and call out its name."

"Ah damn, it's so hot..." Dustin complains while El is murmuring, '*we can do this.*'

Nigel holds up a piece of paper, "Dr. Bravestone! This is the map of Jumanji. You must go to the bazaar to find the missing piece."

Will walks over to Nigel who is still in the vehicle, grabbing the piece of paper as he frowns, "the bazaar? Missing paper of what?" But instead of replying, Nigel ignores him, a happy smile on his face as he starts the engine of the vehicle. Giving everyone one last grin, Nigel shouts.

"Cheerio!" And with that, he's gone as he speeds away, whistling.

Everyone watches in disappointment, and Will turns to the rest with the map in his hand. [Name] steps up, "so...?"

"Well, we have a map. I guess next step is to find the bazaar." Lucas shrugs. Will walks up to him, pulling out the jewel in his pocket.

"Oh by the way, can you keep this?"

Lucas looks at him in an offended manner, "what in the *hell*? I'm not your maid!"

"Yeah, but you're the only one with the backpack, Lucas." He replies as he tries to open Lucas' bag, to which he slaps his hands away.

"I'll do it!"

Dustin speaks up after the whole fiasco, his index finger up as he speaks, "okay, so we find the bazaar, put the jewel in the Jaguar statue, and then we go home?"

[Name] nods, "apparently. But where do we even start?"

"Can't we just leave the game, avoid doing this stuff and go home?" El tiredly exclaims, arms held out in exasperation before sitting on the ground, exhausted. Mike sits beside her, pulling the girl in a side hug as they rest.

"I....I think we have to finish the game." Will frowns.

Everyone is quiet as they let the statement sink in their heads, and despair somehow clung unto their guts as they realized there's no way out until they do it right and finish the quest. There's no family members to help them, and no clear instructions on what the hell they have to do than the vague put the jewel back and save the day.

[Name] purses her lips, watching everyone struggle in their own way. Lucas is slapping away mosquitoes as he scratches himself with an irritated expression, Dustin is now on the ground stretching his tired legs. Mike and El are leaning against each other as they rest while Will looks deep in thought, his arms crossed over his chest. Releasing a tired huff, [Name] also settles on the ground to get some rest.

Save Jumanji? What a cruel joke.

5. Chapter 5

THE PLAYERS.

Everyone let silence hung in the air, slowly replenishing their energy before continuing forward. Will has his back on them as he remained silent, and [Name] wonders just what he's thinking about.

'Don't cry, don't cry, don't cry, don't cry, don't cry...' The boy closes his eyes as he purses his lips, keeping his noises to himself as he smacks his neck, trying to kill a mosquito, '*there are so many diseases out here....and it's so hot, too.'*

Inhaling deeply, he composes himself before turning to everyone. Okay, this is what the party does. They play video games. *Yeah, it's what they're great at.*

"Okay, everyone, let's start uh..talking about--*this.*" Will nervously stutters, and Dustin nods with him, standing. It's better to start sooner than later. And with how unfamaliar and unpredictable Jumaji is, it'd probably be only a matter of time before they next catastrophe chases them away.

"You're right. We have no choice so we better start," Dustin walks up beside Will, and he blinks for a while as he notices there's so much dirt in his eyes, "what the hell's *this*?"

"Just clean your lenses, it's probably dust," Will advises as he disappointingly watches as Dustin tries to clean it with his fingers,"well, anyways, so obviously, with a game like this, there'll be levels." He continues and watches as Lucas perk up.

"Yeah, that's right. In order to finish the game, you gotta complete all the levels." Lucas and the rest starts to follow a walking Will, who definitely still has no idea where to even go. There are so many trees and little bushes that he somehow feel scared of going first because of what might pop up and eat him.

Mike stands, and helps El to stand as well, "and obviously, levels are gonna get harder as we go along," They follows suit, "so, we complete the levels..." he sighs as they start to wonder just where Will is going.

[Name] is the first to speak up about it, "hey Will, do you even know where we're going?" She asks as the boy turns to her, shuffling his feet.

"Kind of." He sounded unsure somehow. The two girls raises an eyebrow while Mike and Dustin muttered a '*Jesus...*'.

Lucas meanwhile, did not take to it kindly, "*kind of*? Oh, that's good, then. We're in good hands." He looks terrified for a moment after sarcastically retorting. Will ignores him and pulls out the map from his pocket, seeing a ripped corner. He frowns.

"Okay, the missing piece, I'm guessing..."

El suddenly snaps her finger as realization displays itself on her face, "oh my God, that must be what we're looking for--the missing piece of the map!" Her and [Name]'s hand met each other in a high five.

But Will's frown does not go away, "But the problem is, there's nothing here."

Dustin walks up to him, confused. *A map with nothing in it?* But when he checks, a map is clearly written all over the paper, "what do you mean? It's a map, just like he said. Maybe you're the one that needs glasses."

Will look at him with a weirded out expression. Because there is *absolutely nothing* on the paper. The rest walks over to them, looking over Will's shoulder to see a blank piece of paper. Everyone looked at Dustin with a blank expression.

The boy stutters in annoyance, "It's *clearly* a map of Jumanji. Wha--stop looking at me like that, assholes!"

[Name] remains silent. How is Dustin the only one seeing it? He's mad, isn't he? Staring straight into Dustin's eyes, she sees nothing but confused honesty. How is that? Thinking back on his character, she realizes. Professor....cartography--her eyes widened. *That's right!*

"Cartography!"

"What's that?" El asks, and [Name]'s gasp surprises the shit out of

everyone.

"The study of maps! It's one of Professor Oberon's skills." She explains further with a smile as everyone's faces transition to realization.

"Yes....that's right." Will huffs in amazement before pushing the paper towards Dustin who is beaming with pride. His happiness is so contagious that the two girls releases a chuckle.

"Oh, so you can't see this, but I can?" Dustin sounds smug as he observes the map, and Mike rolls his eyes.

"So, the characters we chose all have certain skills." Lucas murmurs and [Name] nods. It was in the description, and she wonders what else they can do.

Will finally speaks again as he tries to slap mosquitos away from him, irritated, "So there's gotta be a way to access our...--" a sudden green transparent screep pulses out of Will's chest and El and Dustin releases a surprised scream.

"What'd you just do?!" Lucas looks over in amazement at the floating screen, and there are words plastered on it that says...

"Strengths: Fearless, climbing, speed, boomerang..." [Name] looks on, confused at the next words, "smoldering intensity? What the hell is that?"

Everyone turns to Will, who holds an expeession they can't quite place. Lucas is in so much disbelief that he didn't know what to say.

"What the hell are you doing?" Mike asks shakily, scared.

"Uhm...what just happened?" El follows up, face scrunched in a weirded out manner. [Name] bursts into unfiltered laughter at what she'd seen, the disbelief evident but overpowered by hilarity.

Lucas sighs in exasperation, "you just smoldered, weirdo."

Will ignores the insult and reads on, "Weakness....none?"

"*That* is so overpowered. It's not even fair. I was supppsed to be Bravestone." Mike grumbles.

"How'd you do that though? That...that list?" El wonders as she tries to pat herself the same way Will did. Everyone started doing the same.

"Well, I just...I think I just pressed my, my...chest, like the boob area," Will stutters as he watches Lucas pat himself in the wrong side, "let me show you."

"Okay, dude, please get away from me."

[Name] is the second one to successfully do it, and her mouth falls open at the words, "Strengths: Karate, T'ai chi, Aikido....dance fighting? Dance fighting? Is that even a thing?" She looks on confused as everyone shrugs.

El then continues for her, "Weakness: Venom." That's pretty reasonable.

Dustin pats his chest as well, reading his skills out loud, "Paleontology. What does that even mean?"

"Study of fossils." Will answers.

"That's kind of cool." [Name] murmurs. So, Dustin is a genius?

"Says the karate badass to the fossil guy who doesn't have any endurance." Dustin sarcastically retorts to see his weakness to be endurance.

Suddenly, everyone turns to Lucas who made a stifled noise of anger, "I hate this game!" His red transparent screen is shown above him as he stomps angrily like a child. Dustin and Mike starts laughing at what they read.

"Weakness: Cake." Will echoes. An amused grin plasters itself on his

face.

"*Yes*, cake is my *weakness,"* he scoffs when he sees the rest, and he places his hands on his hips like an old man, "and *apparently* along with speed and strength," he gives Will a pointed look, "*strength* is my weakness. How the *hell* is that even supposed to *work?!*"

Everyone glances at each other in awkwardness, silent as Lucas continued rambling in anger. Well...he's right though...

"How is *strength* my weakness? Somebody *please* explain that to me. Because hey, apparently why the hell would I need *speed*? Why would I need to be *fast w*hen I'm being chased by an enormous killer zebra or some *shit* in this dumb-ass *hat*?" Lucas finishes with gritted teeth, pointing at his explorer hat as everyone except for Will, looks at anything else other than Lucas. He did get the uh...worst statistics...

Trying to cheer him up, Will pipes up, "well, you're also a good weapons valet."

Lucas looks murderous, "and what hell does that even mean?! *Huh*?!"

"Well, I think it means that...you carry my weapons in your backpack and you give them to me when and if I need them...?" Will slowly replies as he shrugs his shoulder, and he stumbles back as Lucas shouts in anger. Everyone glances at each other awkwardly again.

"Apparently, I'm a thief that's allergic to pollen, so..." El trails off as

Mike and [Name] glances at her statistics. Lucas just shakes his head.

Mike titters, "well mine says I can make *margaritas* and may die to mosquito bite."

El smacks a flying mosquito that's on its way to bite her shuffling boyfriend--and inbetween her palm as Mike jumps in surprise as El murmurs, "watch out."

"Can we even drink here?" [Name] wonders.

"Uhh...you guys?" Dustin echoes from a few feet away from them, "The map, it's changing."

"What do you mean? What's it say?" Will appears behind him and Dustin almost slapped him. Giving him a glare, he replies.

"Well, there's not a lot of information. But a minute ago, it didn't say this and now it does," he points at an area in the blank paper even though Will can't read it, "it says, *The Mighty Roar."*

"Oh, *great*..."Lucas mutters. Everyone is gathered behind Dustin, who perks up again.

"Oh! And right here, it says From The Deep. The hippo must've came from the deep."

[Name] comments, "The one that..." but she trails off as she tries to think of a way to put what exactly happened to Dustin. But she didn't worry much as Dustin just nodded lightly.

"So, if The Deep is the first level, then The Mighty Roar must be the second level," Will confirms with Dustin who just nods again, "okay, then which way?"

"If that is that," Dustin points behind them, which is where The Deep is supposed to be, "and that is here....just, right here, I think." As Dustin looks up towards [Name] who is just right in front of him, a red illuminating object flew past their heads, smoke tailing it.

The six watch it circle around before falling to the ground, and right as it hit the ground, it exploded so loud that El felt like her ears are gonna burst again. A revving engine caught their attention, and they all turn their heads to see a man in dark clothing riding a motorcycle--which is headed straight at them. And almost instantly, about fifteen more others appears, all in dark clothing and in motorcycles.

"*Run*!" Will shouts at everyone, but as he turns his head back, his five companions had already left him. Despite being in complete disbelief, he runs after them, "wait!"

Explosions sounded all around them, and Lucas shouts as a nearby explosion rung just a few feet behind him. Mike and El are running in the same pace as Dustin and [Name], which Lucas continues to be behind them. The five watches as Will runs way ahead of them, and Mike curses at him in annoyance.

"Come on, legs!" Dustin shouts as he follows after [Name], the two of them running way farther ahead than Lucas who is terrified for his life.

"Why am I running so slow!? Come on!" Lucas chants as he continues to run after the two, annoyed at his speed, "this sucks ass!" He shouts behind Dustin who almost slips.

"Split up!" Will shouts as they ran inside the forest, El and Mike ahead of him while he waits for Lucas who he drags with him. Dustin individually split from the group, and [Name] runs farther into the forest.

She notices two men in motorcycles behind her, and trying to gain more land, she unconsciously jumps on three thinks branches that she could reach, her body doing a backflip just before hitting the ground on her feet. Amazed and shocked, she continues, "oh, my God, I just did a backflip mid-air. My mom is gonna freak out!"

Dustin remained a few distances from her, and she notices the boy slipping on a muddy patch of land--his body hitting the ground harshly. She sees the incoming motorcycle that's headed towards him, and urging her legs to go faster, she passes by a fallen Dustin and jumps mid-run to gain momentum.

[Name]'s body lifts itself off the ground, her right leg stretching in front of her to deal a flying kick on the driver. Her foot makes contact with his chest harshly, and they both are sent flying, except [Name] lands on the ground in a bad-ass pose while the man in black hits a tree. He's unconscious as [Name] turns to him.

Looking towards Dustin next, she gestures him towards her, "Come on!"

Will and Lucas ran together, and Lucas breathed heavily as the two of them looked around for danger.

"Those guys have huge guns." Will states in a matter-of-fact, and Lucas rolls his eyes.

"*Oh,* really? Wow, I did not know that because it's not like I didn't see it!"

"Let me see your backpack." The brown haired boy ignores his remark, the two of them crouching down to hide behind a tree bark.

"For what?"

"Inside your backpack, you have my weapons--get down." Will gestures Lucas to crouch lower. The boy follows and opens his backpack hastily.

"Got your weapons? But I can't feel no..." Lucas trails off as his hand makes contact with a smooth wooden surface, "what the hell is this?" He pulls out a boomerang with designed edges.

"What are you gonna do with it?" He hands it to Will.

"I don't know! Kill them, I guess?!"

"How the hell are you gonna kill them with that?!"

"You got a better idea? Oh, watch yourself." The two crouched even lower as four men in motorcycles arrived, just a few distance from them and is searching.

Will takes a deep breath before getting ready to throw, "okay, let's try this..." he threw the boomerang, but it curved past the four men. Lucas looks at Will with disdain and disbelief. Will looks sheepish. *Well, that didn't work.*

"*Wow*. Nice work! Want me to see if I got a hacky sack for you to throw and do nothing with?!" Licas angrily mutters before one of the men spots them, and the two started running. The forest is so dense that Lucas felt like he'll get stuck in between the hanging vines and tall plants. Will follows behind him, itching to run past Lucas.

They could hear the motorcycles behind them, and Lucas curses while Will fearfully glances back. The two hit a dead end, and they stumble around as see them coming.

"Oh, no, no, no, *not like this*!" Lucas cries, but Will holds out an arm when the same boomerang he threw before came back around and hit all four targets. Their mouths hangs open in shock and amazement.

The moment was shortlived as they heard more incoming.

"We gotta go!"

"I can't outrun those guys!" Lucas complains as they watch the men quickly getting nearer.

"Okay, then get on my back." Will suggests as Lucas' face falls into irritation.

"I would rather *die*."

"Come on, jump on my back!"

"Nope. *Nope*. I'd rather die--"

"Put me down! Will, you *dumbass*!"

Will couldn't believe the fact that he was able to lift Lucas and still run fast. As he runs with his friend on his back, he notices El and Mike plenty of feet beside them. The trees obscured most of his vision, but he saw Mike throw something at the man behind them. It hit him square in the face and El laughs in disbelief before meeting Will's eyes.

"El!"

"Will!"

"Put me down!" Lucas screams from behind him as another bullet whizzes past them. Mike and El started running beside them, amused to see a very pissed Lucas settled on Will's back.

[Name] and Dustin both ran past the forest now, and a squeak escapes her mouth as she almost stumbles down into a cliff. Dustin stops as well, groaning, "oh, *come on*!" Below them is water, and the waterfall is way too loud in their ears. *They don't even know how deep those waters are*!

Will, Lucas, Mike and El emerged from behind them, and [Name] lights up like a Christmas tree, "El! Will!"

"Lucas! Mike!" Dustin perks up as well, happy to see them, and amused to see Lucas behind Will's back on a piggyback ride. *Now*, that is a sight to see.

"Oh, no, no, no, no, no!" Mike chants aa he glances down the cliff, the noise of the waterfall exploding in his ears.

"We have to jump!" [Name] shouts. There's no other way out. They're way too outnumbered and outgunned. She glances behind her, *and they're coming too.*

"Are you out of your mind?!" Dustin shouts at the girl.

"I would very much do anything else right now rather than that." El shouts from beside Mike who takes her hand in his. They two made eye contact, and Mike squeezes her hand, nodding in reassurance.

"It's okay, El," she nods, before the two got ready. Within two seconds, they're running, "*jump*!" And two did just that. The remaining ones screams.

"Oh hell no!" Lucas cries out.

"I'm gonna count from one to three and then we jump!" [Name] looks at the three boys, and Will nods in determination. They have to do this. Despite his fear of the water, he trusts his friends will be there to save him if anything happens.

"*One...*"

Will helps Lucas down, his eyes on the counting girl who is breathing heavily. Their eyes connected.

"*Two...*"

Dustin starts running, and the three watches as he jumps way ahead of them, "*three*!" He shouts and screams as he starts falling down the murky waters.

The three are in disbelief, but [Name] reaches for Will's hand who's closest to her--seeing his petrified expression, "*now*!"

Right as the men emerged from the forest behind them, Lucas, Will [Name] jumped. Their hearts almost jumped the same way out of their chest, and the height is so high that [Name] thought her soul left her body. But Will's hand remains as a reminder she's still here, albeit *falling*. The two remained with their hands entwined, while Lucas screams his lungs out.

And for a moment, Will is not afraid of water.

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6. Chapter 6

THE BAZAAR.

Water engulfed [Name]. The hand she held slipped from her gasp, and for a moment, she panicked. But kicking her legs and moving her hands, she resurfaced with a big inhale. The waterfall is just on their left, the water falling on the river exploding in her ears. The girl then gets rid of the water on her face.

Dustin is being helped by El and Mike while Lucas is on the water still beside her. [Name] snaps her head around as she manages to stay afloat, worry spreading across her chest as she sees no Will in sight.

"Will!" She screams above the water. El and Mike echoes after her, and Mike jumps back in the water to look for his friend. The girl does the same, going down into the water and seeing a blur of beige. Mike is already on him, and he pulls the boy up as she swims towards them.

Will gasps for air as he resurfaces, coughing out water as he clings to Mike who brings him to land. [Name] follows them and his friends gathers around Will, all worried.

"Oh my God, Will, are you okay?" El rushes to him.

Everyone but [Name] looks extra worried despite the fact that Will is alright. She wonders why is that as she furrows her eyebrows. As they wait for Will to speak, [Name] gasps as pain starts to erupt from behind her shoulder.

Turning her upper body around, she curses out, "*oh, shit*."

Everyone screams for her this time as her body disintegrates into nothing. The arrow that was once behind her back also disappears, and Will scrambles to where she was.

"*Oh, my God*!" El stood with her mouth open, and the rest follow.

"*Come on, come on*!" Will mutters as they all looked up to the sky, a technical ding sounded in the heavens before a familiar figure emerges from the clouds, falling down.

[Name] lands on her two feet, in a semi-crouch and the ground cracks a bit at the impact. She sways for a moment, before looking at everyone and standing up straight, "holy shit, you guys. That was the most painful thing I've experienced yet." She laughs breathlessly and El runs to her to engulf her in a bone-crushing hug.

Will releases a breath of relief before he crouches, still shaken up. Running a hand through his wet brown locks, he falls on his butt, elbows resting on his knees. Mike settles next to him.

"Hey, you okay?"

"Yeah, just...shaken up, is all." He quietly answers. Despite the fact that it happened *five* years ago already, being engulfed in murky waters made it seem like it was only yesterday. But he's glad he's alive for the second time around. Glancing at [Name], he's suprised to see her already looking.

[Name] watches as Will continue to sit with a troubled expression. With how glum and worried everyone was after the jump he made, she figures it's most likely because of a past accident. Giving him a reassuring smile, she pulls a hand out for him to take.

"Come on, Dr. Bravestone, we got a whole game to finish."

Will lets a smile overtake his features. He lets her pull him up to stand, his hands grasping hers the second time. But this time around, he's falling towards *something else.*

[Name] pulls away way too soon, and Will clenches and unclenches his hand as her warmth leaves the spaces of his palms and fingers.

They hear Dustin snicker, which El pinches him for. A quiet '*ow*!' leaves his lips as Will treks forwards, the rest falling into step behind him. El and [Name] fell into the same pace, the two glancing at each other before El releases a giggle.

She loops her arm around [Name], pulling her to her side as she whispers in a sing-song voice, "you're blushing."

The girls squeaks, putting her gloved hands on her warm cheeks as she stutters, "am not!" She denies in a low voice, and El just rolls her eyes. Silence falls on the two of them, and [Name] frowns as she remembers what just happened, "hey, El?"

"Yeah?"

"Will...something happened to him, right? That's why..." she trails off, realizing its no good talking about it to anyone else other than Will. But El sighs beside her, glum.

"Mhm, but it's really not my place to say."

"Yeah, I know. Just...realized it after seeing everyone's reaction. But you know what? You're right, let's not talk about this. I don't wanna pry in Will's life." She gives herself a nod, inhaling as they climbed over a particularly big hill. The two started having a conversation about songs, and the two of them agreed their current favorites would have to be *I Think We're Alone Now* by *Tiffany*. They started singing in low voices, when suddenly, the boys started arguing.

"Oh, *come on*, this has to be a fucking joke." Dustin groans as they stand past the bushes infront of the girls. Mike stands with a hand on his hip and the other harshly rubbing his forehead. Lucas is silent for once while Will is breathing heavily as seen by the fall and rise of his shoulders.

El and [Name] glance at each other with worry before they head on

over to them. But when they finally reach the boys, the [h/c] girl's mouth falls open along with the rise of her eyebrows--seeing the cliff that is very much higher than the one where they had to jump off the first time. Just over it are trees growing out of the spaces of the rocks, and below it is almost hard to see, but the blurry horde of buffaloes appears to be running in the same direction.

"What do we do, Will?" [Name] worriedly asks, "we have to be out of the forest before dark." They don't know Jumanji that well, and they are still ignorant when it comes to danger behind the shadows and corners of the game. And with how dangerous it is at daytime, it'll be worse by night time.

Will glances at her [e/c] eyes, before he runs a hand through his hair. *What are they gonna do?* He doesn't want to screw this up. They have to finish this game before it finishes them.

"Honestly? I...I don't know," he glances at everyone's gloomy expression, before continuing, "but I do need your help. I don't think I can do this on my own."

"I don't think anybody can, honestly." Mike mutters a reply, before giving Will a determined look. El gives him a smile, nodding.

"Well, I guess it's best we look at the map, no?"

Dustin pulls out the said map, and everyone walks over to him immediately, "well, we're past the The Waterfalls. I think we're...somewhere around here," he points at a blank area and Luvas sighs, "oh sorry, we're like, at The Eagle's Eye."

Lucas frowns, "Eagle's eye? Now, that just doesn't sound ri--"

Dustin, Will, El and [Name] all cry out together as a huge eagle comes out of nowhere, snatching Will by his upper body before he is dropped into the cliff as he struggles stupidly in its claws. It all happened so fast that the five remained frozen in place, silence overtaking them.

"...*what*...just happened?" Lucas finally asks outloud what everyone is asking themselves, their eyes trained on where Will was standing five seconds ago.

And almost instantly, the familiar ding that signifies Will coming back to life is heard, and they all watch, still frozen in place as Will drops from the sky and in front of them. Just like [Name], he lands perfectly on his feet, the ground beneath him breaking under the brute force.

"*Will*...you just got picked up by an enormous eagle." Dustin states flatly, still in clear disbelief. *And it all happened within two minutes too.* Dustin feels the fear slowly crawling up his gut.

"Uhh...can we *go*? 'Cause I don't wanna be bird food." Mike shakily asks, and Dustin takes off in a random direction with Lucas following after him. Mike and El wastes no time, and [Name] holds out a hand for Will who is still shellshocked. *Poor guy just lost a life to an eagle...*

"We don't wanna be bird food again, don't we?" She muses with a

sympathetic smile, and Will releases a shaky breath before accepting her hand. The two runs off just as a caw sounds from a distance.

"Wait, what are we supposed to be doing?" Mike asks as the six of them enters a village they assume is the *bazaar*. It's like an *Indiana Jones* set, and El incredulously looks at the merchants and unique artifacts being sold. [Name], who is beside her is tying the loose shirt Dustin had lend to her around her waist. The shorts she's wearing is too tight and too short for her liking. It feels like she's wearing a bikini...

"Looking for the missing map piece." Dustin replies as he looks around the area.

"So we just start asking for it?" Lucas asks as his eyes wander over a stall that sells a whole lot of delicious looking fruit. He realizes just how hungry he is.

"No, I think we have to look around, scope the place out." Will mumbles as he walks behind [Name], looking over her head to check for something unusual. He couldn't help but think about the times she had held his hand. Although, he knows it's to comfort him, he can't help but hope for something more whenever she's so nice to him.

A food vendor catches their eyes, and Lucas gulps as he hears his

stomach rumble. Dustin, who's beside him holds a hand on his tummy, "do you guys have some money? I'm literally starving."

"*Rations, get your rations!"*

"I think the game is trying to tell us to keep our health up." Lucas is the first to head on to the stall, eager to get a bite. There are so many to choose from, but he accepts the one the vendor gave him.

Everyone heads on over to grab tbeir rations, and Mike moans as the soft bread enter his mouth, "holy *shit*, this bread is *so* good." El laughs as she nods, grabbing one more piece.

Lucas is gobbling up the bread as if he's not even chewing, while Dustin stores some of it in his bag. He tries not to look at the vendor, scared that he might attack him.

"Oh, what's this called, by the way?" El asks the vendor as she looks the bread over, appreciating the tastiness and appearance, who proudly replies.

"That's my famous pound cake."

Lucas' mouth hangs open, and crumbs start to fall out, "...cake?" He gulps and looks at Mike who is still eating, "Mike, you said this was bread."

"What? I don't know man, I'm just trying to eat here." Mike grumbles. El realizes the problem, and she smacks Mike in the chest as she gasps.

"Oh, my God, Lucas! Drop it!" [Name] grabs the cake and politely puts it back to the stall as Lucas hyperventilates. Everyone is worriedly looking him over meanwhile, and Mike grimaces at Lucas' unfortunate predicament.

"Wha...what's happening? Is something happening to me?" Lucas fearfully asks as he stands still, eyes darting from everyone's concerned faces.

"No."

"Am I...am I shaking?"

Dustin shakes his head, "just your words, bud."

"Am I breaking out?"

Everyone shakes their head.

"Am I still black?" Lucas asks for the fourth time, and they all starts to get confused with the fact that nothing is really happening to him.

"*Yes*."

"Okay, okay, that's good, right? I'm fine. Everything is fine. Yeah, no, no, no, it's okay. It probably just meant that I *really, really* love cake," he is now rambling and [Name] exchanges a worried glance with Will. El is anticipating for the worst as she covers her face and Dustin is hiding discreetly behind Mike.

"I probably couldn't resist it, yeah? Hey, it's all good...I'm goo--"

Lucas explodes into tiny particles and everyone screams in unison at the sudden shocking turn of events. *So, that's why*! [Name] covers her mouth to avoid gaging at what they all had to witness. Despite there being no blood, it was still definitely disgusting.

"*Dear* God!"

"What the *hell*?!"

Dustin gagged at the whole thing, crying as he crouches, "*oh, son of a bitch...oh, God...*"

A familiar sound and scream echoes from the skies again, and they all watch as Lucas flops to the ground, his frontal body hitting the floor *hard.* Everyone winces.

A squeaky sounding Lucas speaks, "*I'm fine...*"

[Name] helps the groaning boy up while Dustin shudders, "never again, Lucas. Never again."

"Yeah, no shit, Sherlock."

7. Chapter 7

THE MISSING PIECE.

After the whole fiasco with Lucas blowing into a million smithereens, the group split up into three pairs as they scope the area again. Mike and El are together, Dustin and Lucas, and then Will and [Name]. El wanted to go with the girl, but Mike pulled her away with a look of mischief. Dustin and Lucas were quick to leave the two to build their *budding romance*, as Lucas would put it.

The two were silent at first, but when the girl asked him about how long he's knows *The Party*--as they would call it--the two easily got comfortable with the conversation.

"So, Lucas wasn't fond of El at first like how El wasn't fond at Max the first time? Because she thought her and Mike were flirting?" She managed to know more about Max Mayfield, Lucas' girlfriend who's apparently also a video game genius. Somehow, she's envious that these kids have such a large group of friends that have each other's back. Back at home, she only has two bestfriends, and now she's lost that too upon moving.

Will chuckles, "yes, but it's all behind us now. How about you?"

"Oh well, I have two friends back at [country/state], I send them letters every now and then--it's like tradition. Auggie and Sumaya. I managed to become the third wheel right before I left," she giggles at her friends' oblivious romance, "I just miss them, most importantly. I know the move is for the better--for my mom's main business. I really can't hold it against them because I know at the end of the day, they are doing this for me and because it's their passion."

Will nods in understanding, smiling at how kind the girl beside her is, "everything will work out well, that's for sure. I guess we'd have to thank your parents because we managed to meet you due to the move." *I managed to meet you.*

The girl releases a laugh, a pink hue blossoming on her cheeks as she looks away from him in a flustered manner, "ah, yes. I'd also have to thank them for that. Meeting you guys is the best thing this move had done for me yet."

A comfortable silence hangs in the air, and [Name] debates on whether to ask him about what happened. But realizing they've just met, she deflates. She doesn't want to force it out of him, but curiosity is slowly clawing at her gut, itching to get to know more about the boy beside her.

Will notices her somber expression, and he purses his lips. Is this about what happened earlier? Taking a deep breath, he he turns to her with a smile, "so...you must be wondering about what happened earlier. ..?"

When she turns to him, she looked like a deer caught in headlights, and she pales instantly, "oh! No, no, it's not like that...I don't wanna intrude on that. I was just...thinking." she trails off as Will gazes at

her with a soft expression. She looks away. She notices they're in the same area they came in--the market.

Will sighs, troubled but ready, "I mean...it happened five years ago, it's really no big deal." He mumbled the last part, lying through his teeth.

[Name] narrows her eyes at him, "no way that's *'no big deal'*, I know it bothered you a whole lot, Will. There's no need to act tough about it." She scolds him lightly but sympathetic all the same. Will blinks in surprise before releasing a light chuckle. He's thankful. So, *so,* thankful.

He gives her an embarrassed smile.

"I know..." he glances around this time, confused that they're back in the market, but he turns to her, stopping. *Just a bit more time.* Will just wants a bit more time to spend time with the girl who's looking at him with a worried expression.

"Will?"

"I drowned when I was twelve," the statement suddenly being brought out in the open shocked the girl, and even Will, but he continues while looking through her surprised eyes, "I went missing before that, but my body was found in the local quarry. I can't remember much of it until I woke up, but they said I died. It was a miracle I lived through it," his eyes are elsewhere, eyes glossed over as he look like he's living through it all over again, "for my whole middle school life, I was called *zombie boy*. It's pretty funny looking

back on it now."

Will is surprised to hear a sniffle, and warmth enveloped his left hand as [Name] looks at him with a sympathetic gaze, "I'm so sorry, Will...that's so terrible..."

The boy gives her a warm smile, "it's okay. I'm over it now," he notices her sudden frown, "*partially*."

"Those kids were terrible. You're a miracle, Will," a sudden smile appears from her face as she shyly continues, "a *miracle boy*." She erupts in embarrassed laughter, and Will couldn't help but laugh as well. Somehow, this sudden talk with [Name] made him feel so much lighter. A bit more *freer*.

"Dr. Bravestone!"

A shriek escapes both of their mouths, turning their heads to their front to see a young boy with a smile, innocently looking at them, "thank goodness you're here. Jumanji needs you!"

"Uh...thanks...?" Will murmurs, and [Name] finally lets go of their entwined hands. The two of them clears their throat and Will continues, "it's um...good to be here."

Suddenly, Lucas and Dustin scrambles over to them, terrified, "There! There!" Dustin points at the two and they run over to them, "thank God! Some guy kept trying to get us in their brothel! I'm just

seventeem!"

"And I have a scary girlfriend!" Lucas cries out as the both of them hides behind Will and [Name], who just ignores them.

"Ask about the missing piece." Will nudges [Name] who frowns with a *'why me?'* look. Will refuses to look at her and she huffs in anger. He stifles laughter. Between the two of them, she's more suited for children anyways.

"Oh, right. Hi there. I'm [Name]--I mean...Ruby Roundhouse, something. I'm um..." she trails off, "a friend of Dr. Bravestone. We have this map that has a missing piece--"

"Dr. Bravestone! Thank goodness you're here. Jumanji needs you."

"Rude!" The girl gasps as she stands up in an offended manner. Will's eyes widens and he shares a laugh with the three boys. She glares at them in spite.

"Uh, hey, we need to find the missing piece of this map that we have." Will finally steps up. Meanwhile, Lucas is asking [Name] where the couple are, but she shrugs. *Where could those two be?* They turn their attention back to the child, who has ran off. Scrambling after him, the four shouted for him to wait. But the child leads them to a closed area surrounded by colorful curtains. It's a small space, and in the middle of it is a casket. Will exchanges worried looks with the rest.

"*What you need is in the basket.*
One false move, you're in a casket.
Trust one another, and never blink.
The missing piece is not what you think."

They gulp at the kid's sudden change in tone. But listened all the while. Was that a puzzle? Before they could get a word in, he returns to his normal voice, "Oy vey! Good luck, mighty hero. Jumanji needs you!"

"Jumanji needs him. We know. You said it several times." Dustin brushes the kid off, who runs away. The four releases a sigh.

"So...thinking there's a...snake in there or something?" Lucas nervously asks and Dustin answers for him.

"Yep."

"Well! That sounds like a Bravestone thing to me." Lucas smiles at Will, who in turn looks terrified.

"Wha--why would this be a Bravestone thing?"

"Because you are a mighty hero. You heard what he said. Jumanji needs you. Now, get in there." Dustin lightly pushes him to the

casket.

"Woah, you guys!" [Name] tries to be the mediator.

"I don't wanna do this!"

"Just go, man. You can do this." Lucas gives Will a thumbs up and he frowns.

"Be careful." [Name] gives him a reassuring smile, and he nods in appreciation.

Will slowly walks over to the casket, looking around afraid that something might come out and kill him. He could hear the pounding of his heart, and looking back to where the three are who are huddled together, he gulps. His fingers gingerly grasps the lid, and counting one to three in his head, he opens it.

They all scream and Will closes the casket tightly.

"Black mamba! That's a black mamba!" Lucas shrieks, "a quarter milligram of its venom is enough to kill an adult!" He looks at a screaming Dustin, mirroring his petrified expression, "you'll feel a tingling sensation in your mouth and extremities, followed by a fever, foaming at the mouth and *ataxia*, which means loss of muscle control!"

Everybody looks at him with an amazed expression.

"How do I know that?"

"What do we do?" Dustin turns to Will.

"Did you see anything else in there?" [Name] asks, clutching Dustin's shoulders from the scare earlier.

Will shakes his head, "I didn't see, I didn't have time!"

"Oh, my God. Okay..." the girl started thinking, pacing around before settling at the other end of where Will is, "trust one another and never blink. Never blink..." she mumbles the words, trying to come up with something. Dustin suddenly pipes up.

"You guys...I think it's a staring contest."

"What? What are you talking about?" Lucas asks beside him.

"Think about it. Never blink?"

"Guys, I think he is right." [Name] murmurs in realization.

"At camp, they used to tell us if you see a rattlesnake, don't move. I think someone has to make direct eye contact and not blink," Dustin says with a smile, "and then you," he points at Will, "will reach in and grab whatever else is in there."

"Why me again?"

"Because you're Bravestone." Lucas answers.

"Okay, fine."

[Name] glances at them, "Who's good at staring and not blinking?"

"Me! I'm amazing at it." Dustin raises his hand.

"Then this is your moment. Come on, Dustin, you can do it." The girl gives him a smile which he reciprocates. Despite the nervousness and fear, Dustin is determined to not get killed.

"Just say when."

Will nods and [Name] gets into place, inhaling deeply as she awaits. If anything goes awry, she's the one with one of the fastest reflexes, thus, the one to take the fall. Will counts in his head again, before breathing in.

"Now!" He opens the lid and the black mamba immediately springs up. Dustin manages to get it to look at him, but while Will looks at whatever is in the casket, the snake jumps out and [Name] manages to grab it by the neck, with Dustin screaming his lungs out. She pants as she looks at it wide-eyed.

"What do we do?!" Dustin screams.

"You gotta defang it." Lucas states shakily behind Dustin.

"I gotta what?!"

But Lucas is the one who approaches the squirming reptile in [Name]'s grasp, and Will watches in worry for the two as Lucas gently pulls it's upper mouth up, "you got to pull his mouth back from the blindspot to disorient it, but be very careful of the venom gland and the exposed secondary venom duct," his fingers slowly moves to the snake's teeth and everyone watches in bated breath, "and then you gotta *snap* its teeth out of its head." Lucas snaps both its teeth, and [Name] places the snake back in the casket.

"I guess it wasn't a staring contest." Dustin says and they all laugh in relief.

"Trust each other and never blink. You trusted me," Lucas looks at the girl and [Name], "You trusted me, and I defanged the snake," a smile makes its way to his lips, "I did it. I did that." He breathlessly laughs and [Name] pulls him in a quick celebratory hug.

"Yeah. You did that!" She pulls away, "being a zoologist is *so* cool."

"You did it, Lucas." Will high fives the boy and Lucas laughs proudly.

"Thank you. Wow."

"You guys?" Dustin calls out from beside them, a piece of something in his hand, "this does not look like a piece of a map." He holds up a dark object shaped like an elephant. Everyone frowns in confusion.

"The missing piece is an elephant?"

"Oh, wait, there's something written on the wrapping paper," Dustin uncovers the folded paper and everyone walks over to him, "huh...'*when you see me...begin the climb*'."

"Begin the climb?" Will echoes.

"When you see an elephant?" [Name] asks with a confused face.

"I defanged a snake..." Lucas is still mumbling to himself, proud at what he's done.

"So keep your eyes peeled for an elephant, I guess?" Will states albeit questioningly as they head out the area. The three tailed after him as he puts the item in his pocket.

"Is that like the next level of the game?"

Suddenly, the men in black from earlier starts to make a commotion, and the four stops as they watch in surprise. Will is once again the first to scramble away when they are noticed.

"Hey!"

"Run!" Lucas shouts as they start scrambling away, the men right at their tail. The four are bumping into angry people, and despite being apologetic, the fear overcomes them.

"Watch out!"

Will is so far ahead of them that they lose sight of him. [Name] angrily growls at the idiot who's always the first to run.

"Hey!" A big, bald man with long beard appears infront of Will, and he gulps as he stops.

"I have to warn you...I think I'm a very strong puncher." He stupidly states as he nervously looks at the big man. The bald enemy swings his fist, but Will subconsciously leans his head back to avoid it and hits it away. *Oh my God.*

"Parry."

The two of them look confused at the sudden deflect. The man swings again and he parries again, "parry," another hit, another--"parry," he swings again and Will lowers as his fist swing over him, "evade," and within the fourth punch, he manages to catch it, "block."

The both of them looks confused, but Will speaks, "uppercut." He punches the man from below, hitting him square in the chin as the man is thrown upwards by the force of the blow, "oh, my...fists." Will breathlessly looks at his hand he used to punch.

He smirks in disbelief, before running forward into another assailant, "Duck!" He ducks the first hit, "headsmash!" He smashes the man's head into a tall wooden cart.

Another runs to him, and he avoids the swing of a blade before pocking up the man and smashing him to the ground, "Kapow!" He laughs in amazement at his newfound power before he continues to deflect and hit two more. The last one is tossed to a wall, and the three arrives just in time to watch the scene unfold. Will managed to destroy the assailants all while announcing his moves like a nerd. Their mouths hangs open.

"Will!" [Name] calls out to him and he turns to them with a wide smile.

"That is insane!" Dustin shouts as he laughs with Will and Lucas.

"How'd you do that?!" Lucas runs up to him along with the two.

"I don't know!"

They run ahead again, and more started appearing. A man with knives started throwing it at them, missing the first two before the third was stopped by Will as it almost hit Lucas who shrieks. Will gives it to Lucas before running to the knife thrower.

"Let's do this."

"Do what?" Lucas asks in a dazed manner before handling it over to [Name], "pu--put it in my backpack."

Will walks to the man and immediately dodges the first knife swing, "Dodge!" He grabs the man's arm and slams his head on the wooden table filled with meat, "Headslam!" And suddenly, he grabs him the by the shirt, "throw through ceiling!" The man screams as he's thrown up into the air and past the stick ceiling.

"Holy shit!"

He continued to beat five more men singlehandedly, most of them being thrown through walls and pillars. Just as he finishes, gunshot rings out and Van Pelt emerges from a dark alleyway. People starts to run away, screaming in panic.

The four looks at the mad adventurer, seeing one of his eyes had

turned cloudy white. Behind him were some of his men, and everyone gulps, "Hello, doctor. Been a long time," *who the hell is this guy*? "I believe you have something that belongs to me."

"We just wanna go home." Will reasons with Van Pelt, but his men only cocked their guns and pointed in at them. The four gulps as newfound fear envelops them. *Just when shit started to get cool...*Lucas thinks. *Just where the hell is Mike and El*?!

Right before anything goes wrong, a smoke bomb was thrown in the middle of the two groups, and familiar voices starts to ring out.

"Come on, you guys! Hurry!" El and Mike appeared behind them, and the amount of relief the four felt is so huge Dustin started laughing.

"Holy moly!"

"Get him!" Van Pelt orders his men as the six starts to run away, following Mike and El to God-knows-where. Gunshots continue to ring out as they tried to find their way out of panicking locals. The couple turns around a corner, and they open a metal lid that leads to what seems to be a manhole.

"Come on, down here. Come on. Quick!" El is the first to jump down, followed by [Name]. The rest of the boys follow and Mike goes last before shutting it off. A wooden ladder is their way down, and Dustin started to ramble.

"Where the hell were you guys?!"

"Where are we?" Lucas asks as he looks around. Will gives Mike a quick hug, both relieved to see each other. El also engulfs [Name] in a tight hug, the two girls panting but happy to be reunited.

"Okay, before that, follow us. Do exactly as we say," Mike lights up a torch and heads inside a pathway filled with carvings on the wall.

"What the *fuck,* Mike?" Dustin hisses as they follow them deeper.

"Oh, my God, you guys, I am so happy you guys are okay." El breathes out with a smile, "we're sorry on disappearing on you guys like that."

"El, where the hell are we?" [Name] murmurs as they looked around. How were they able to find this?

"Backs against the wall!" Mike suddenly orders and everyone does what they're told. A whole lot of arrows come flying from the middle and unto the wall. Everyone's eyes widened as they see a skeleton stuck on the wall.

"*What the hell*?!" Dustin cries out.

"Let's keep moving, watch your step in here," they rounded into a corner and a checkpoint greets them. There are so many carved

windows, even the floor is carved along with the walls. There are five doors, but Mike and El leads them forward.

"How did you guys know about this?" Will asks.

"Well obviously, we went snooping around, dummy." Mike sarcastically replies as they trekked forward.

"It was mostly gut feeling, honestly," El says, "we thought it will lead to the missing piece, but lead to somewhere even more bigger. Oh, and we need to tell you guys something important."

They all looked at each other.

They rounded around a corner again, "stay off the white floors and freeze." Mike says and everyone follows. A mirage of large blades emerged from the slit on the walls, and everyone released either shriek or a scream.

"I lost two lives for these shits." Mike angrily mutters, and everyone glanced at him worriedly as the blades retracted. El also looks sheepish.

"Me too..."

[Name] is the first to react at the sudden news, "*oh my God*, you

guys!"

El gives her a guilty look, "but it's okay, you guys still have yours. And we know you got our back so we're not worried."

"It's still dangerous!" Will scolds them but Mike ignored them and continued walking.

"This game sucks." Lucas murmurs. He's feeling all kinds of angry, afraid and tired. When will this *end*?!

"Stop." Mike speaks up again, and everyone sees the whole in the floor where a whole lot of huge crocodiles are hanging out below. Will starts to hyperventilate with Dustin and Lucas.

"Holy crap..." [Name] murmurs as she watch Mike grab a plank.

"Here, come on. Be careful, it's a a horrible way to die." He advises. The girl gulps, realizing one of them died here.

Lucas gulps, "I bet..."

The girls went first, and the rest follows. Dustin is screeching the whole while before he crashes unto Will who holds him steady. They continue once again and Lucas cries out in annoyance and exasperation.

"Are we there yet?"

El nods in reply as they enter a small space filled with glued rocks. Infront is a stone door which Mike pushes open. Fresh air suddenly hit their faces as they rush out in glee.

"*Air*!" Dustin cries as he rolls on the ground. Lucas is almost teary-eyed while Will and [Name] sigh in relief. They then turn to the couple.

"That's not the best part." El smiles as she gestures for them to follow her and Mike. They are surrounded by tall trees, and the ambiance is so beautiful as the sunlight peeks through the trees, the warmth of it relaxing on their skin.

They follow the two once again and what awaited then got them spluttering out in surprise.

"What the hell is this place?!" Dustin shouts as a house in the middle of the jungle greeted them. There are lanterns hanging to serve as light and the open house is complete with a hammock, kitchen, and a living area.

"I know right?!" El gleefully exclaims as she rushes inside, followed by [Name]. The two girls settle on the hammock, fitting as the lay down. They both groan in satisfaction, their tired legs finally able to rest.

"This day has been so tough..."

"Who lived here?" Will asks as Lucas and Dustin snoop around. There are so many trinkets and household items that they wonder just how long the owner lived here.

"Some guy named Alan Parrish," Mike answers, before walking inside with Will, "okay everyone, there's actually one thing me and El found out."

Everyone turns to him.

"Hey, what's with the candles?" Dustin calls out.

"I don't know but I think its for the mosquitoes. My weakness, but anyways, listen," Mike gestures for them to listen, and they glanced at each other with how serious Mike looks, "we found the missing piece."

Everyone exclaims in happiness, and Mike smiles with pursed lips, "yeah, it's me."

"*What*?!"

8. Chapter 8

THE PILOT.

"It wasn't the elephant," Mike says as he points to object in Will's grasp, "it was me."

Dustin is the first to reply, "great! So, what do we do now?"

Lucas looks at him weirdly, as does everyone else, "we almost got killed. It turns out we went there for nothing. I *died* because of that cake." Lucas says in an exasperated manner, and [Name] stands from the hammock, leaving El to rest.

"Maybe the game level broke or something, because we had complete characters the moment we started the game." She says as she sits beside Will and in front of the kitchen area. Will sighs.

"Yeah, I guess that explains it. But let's all just rest for now alright? It's been a long day." He settles back on where he sat, and everyone agrees silently. Mike robotically headed to the kitchen to make something, and Dustin watches him before piping up.

"Whatcha making, Mike?"

The boy smirks with a mischievous glint in his eyes, "margaritas."

[Name] stands up almost immediately, "woah, woah! We're *minors*!" Lucas shuffles to Mike despite her protests, curious as well. El just blew a raspberry as she plays with something in her hand. Seems like El is too tired to tell the boys off, so [Name] decided to try one more time, "we can't do these levels if we're drunk."

"Who says we'll be drinking until we're drunk?" Dustin retaliates, "plus, its not like there are adults here." He snickers with Lucas and Mike.

"I don't think this is a good idea..." Will mumbles to the girl beside him, who replies with a '*ya think?'* look. He laughs awkwardly in reply. Deciding it won't be worth it, she decided to snoop around, finding trinkets and other household items like pans, a radio, and a small stove. She starts to wonder how long the Alan Parrish guy lived in the game under such dangerous conditions. Along with this, she realizes there's a chance Alan Parrish might still be alive somewhere or six feet under. She hums in thought. Did he play the game with other people too? Or, was he alone?

With all these questions, her head start to hurt, so she settles again beside El who welcomed her. They laid parallel to each other, silent for a moment before El speaks, "how long do you think we'll be here for?"

Their conversation is cut off for a moment when all *four* boys spat the alcoholic beverage, releasing disgusted noises as Dustin screams about it burning his throat. Even Will who's supposed to keep them in

line is coughing at the taste. The two girls just just rolls their eyes.

"I don't know, until we finish the game?" [Name] sighs, "my parents are going to be so worried...my dad is literally a whole ball of anxiety..." thinking back on her poor father, she wonders how he's taking the news. Out of her parents, her mom has always been the most calm headed and composed.

El huffs, "tell me about it. My dad's gonna kill me!" She covers her face with her hands, groaning. [Name] rubs a comforting hand on her shoulder, smiling reassuringly. Before she could say anything more, Mike shouts to gather everyone's attention.

"Guys! I see a trail!"

El is the first to stand, helping the other girl up as they walks over to where the boys are. They did see a trail, but upon closer inspection, it leads somewhere down and deeper into the jungle. Lucas is the first to speak up, "well, the sooner we finish the game, the sooner we go home."

Everyone echoes their agreement.

"Dudes..." Dustin inhales deeply, "let's do this."

"Yeah." Mike nods. [Name] and El give each other a smile before they grasps each other's hands. Soon, they follow Mike and Will who are

up front.

"There it is. It looks like a transportation shed."

The six are settled on the huge boulder way farther than the said transportation shed. It's situated at the heart of the jungle, surrounded by trees and huge rocks. There are two guards on duty, which is gonna be a huge problem.

"There's all sorts of vehicles inside. Look." Dustin points at an open window, bringing the binoculars they found at the jungle house to Mike, who takes it. There are mostly air vehicles inside, but there are some trucks and jeeps.

"We gotta get one, get across the canyon and get to the Jaguar statue." Will says, referencing to the canyon Dustin had mentioned earlier on their way here while looking at the map.

"Ok, I see the transportation shed." Lucas hums with the binoculars and passes it to El and [Name].

"I see the canyon, but I still can't see the statue which is weird, 'cause

it's the most important thing in Jumanji and it's huge." Dustin comments as he glances at the map again. El is peeking from behind him.

"Okay, game plan," Mike turns to everyone and they all lean down to better hide thenselves, "we gotta distract those guys first. We can't just waltz in there. They have *big* guns and they can easily call for backup."

"Okay, then how do we distract them?" [Name] asks. Everyone turns to her, "What?"

"What the heck, guys?!" El exclaims, in disbelief at what they suggesting. But the boys turn to her next with silence, "oh *hell* no!"

"You girls have to go down there and flirt with those guys." Lucas shrugs and Mike is internally debating.

"*No*!" Both [Name] and El hisses in retaliation.

"Come on, you guys. Hold their attention while we sneak in." Dustin says as he folds the map and puts it in his pocket. Mike and Will give the girls guilty looks. But El sighs, giving in.

"Okay, alright. Just...be quick." El gives them a hard glare before turning to a panicked [Name]. The girl shakes her head at El.

"No! I can't just go over there and flirt with some weird soldiers I don't even know." She reasons and El reaches for her shoulder.

"I know, but right now we don't have a better idea."

"You don't understand. I actually can't do it. I can't talk to guys. I'm terrible at it!" [Name] admits with a flustered expression, and everyone turns to her in surprise. Somehow, Will and Mike both doubts that.

"I can give you some pointers. We're both gonna be doing it. You have me down there." El comforts the flustered girl.

"*No*, I'm sorry....we--we have to come up with another plan. I'm not--no!" [Name] groans.

"[Name], you just have to distract them long enough for us to get into the shed." Will softly talks to the girl who avoids his gaze. Everyone turns away to give them privacy, Mike subtly ushers El out of the picture, and El purses her lips and comically stumbles away silently.

"I really don't think I can, Will. I'm not...like, I'm not actually some badass girl." She mumbles in embarrassment at Will who frowns. Talking about this is not something [Name] imagined would happen.

"What are you talking about? You're a total badass. You could do

anything. Plus, El would be there to help you. I believe in you guys." Will smiles at the girl who finally looks at him in the eyes, her gaze softening.

"That's beautiful, you guys. Now, why don't we just go ahead and set you guys with a nice candle light dinner?" Mike cooes and El punches him in the arm. The rest snicker while the two move away in embarrassment.

"All right," [Name] breathes out, "show me how it's done."

El giggles, "I'm not sure either, but let's do it!"

"Oh no..."

"Okay, in flirting situations, I think the key is just being subtle. Like um..." El snaps her fingers in thought, "like, you're gonna do something that's attractive to their eyes, and then pretend like you're not doing it, I think. I mean, you know, with Mike, it's sort of different, but I watched a lot of movies about it and I think it works for the most part."

"'*Most part*'?!"

El ignores her, "now, hair is everything. Touch it, move it, play with it."

[Name] does as what she's told, but she managed to awkwardly shake her head and crane it around in a comical way. El winces.

"Move it around a lot, like there's wind but there's not. Flip it, flip it." The girl flips her hair but it got stuck in her mouth and she spits it out in disgust. El looks up at the heavens for support.

"Okay, nevermind. Just run your hand through it, like this." El does an attractive motion through her hair, and [Name] hums in wonder. She copies, albeit it needs more work.

"Okay, good enough. Now the eyes. Make the eyes big, make it sparkle."

"Sparkle?"

"Like a cartoon character. Now *sparkle*." El does what she's saying and [Name] does the same. But she looks more like a deer in headlights. El titls her head with a wince again, "needs work."

"Do you like [Name], Will?" Dustin asks as they silently hide behind the boulder, with Mike using the binoculars to look through entrances inside the transporation shed. Will frowns with a hint of flush.

"Why are we talking about this?"

Lucas snickers from behind them.

"You're right, I mean obviously, you like her. What I mean is, what if she tries to kiss you?"

Will's mouth falls open and he flushes crimson red, finding Dustin's nosiness embarrassing even for himself. Lucas and Mike only stifle laughter while the boy suffers.

"What is wrong with you?"

Dustin smirks at his friend's flustered state, pressing further as result, "Have you ever kissed anyone?"

"*Dustin*!" Will hisses at the boy who only laughs in silence. Lucas pushes him while he laughs while Mike tells then to shut up with a

teasing smile at Will who only gives them a glare, "not funny."

Mike shushes them, before realizing what's ahead of them, "Hey guys. Guys, I found a side door. Over there." The boys wait as Mike passes them the binoculars, and they see a small side door leading inside the shed. But despite the change of topic, Will couldn't help but think back on what Dustin had said.

"Anything you can do to draw attention to the lips. A nibble like this." El bites her lower lip with a smile, and [Name] gulps, finding it hard before ultimately doing it. El raises her eyebrows in surprise.

"Good. That's better," El compliments her and the girl sighs in relief, "now, smile. You look terrified." She advises and [Name] does as what she's told.

Skipping ahead a few minutes, the two girls are still in session. And their fake laughter ringing out as El continues to teach her.

"Oh, my God, you're so funny." El starts and [Name] follows in a more funnier tone.

"You're so funny."

"Oh, my God, you're *so* funny!" El acts and the girl nervously does as well, albeit ten times worse.

"Oh, my God, you're so *funny*!"

A couple more minutes passed, and El chuckles as she speaks, "you're getting it. I think you're ready." She nods and [Name] lets out a sigh of relief.

"Thank God..."

"Flirt like our lives depend on it. Because they do." With that, the two girls took deep breaths and prepared themselves for the worst.

Coming back to the boys, they realize their silence, and El raises an eywbrow before shrugging. Dustin is the first to see them.

"All good?"

"Yep."

"Okay, goodluck you two." Mike says and he give them a reassuring smile. Will does the same, albeit looking a bit more flustered. [Name]'s gaze on him lingers.

"Thanks, we need it."

The two girls emerges from the jungle, and [Name] releases a terrified noise as they head on towards the men who's already looking at them. El taught her how to walk in a flirty manner, and although she feels as though she's doing bad, she hopes it's not obvious. The two of them stop infront of the two soldiers who look a bit alike. [Name] swallows down her nervousness, before giving a flirty wave and a flip of her hair.

"Hello, ladies. What are you two doing out here all alone?" One of the soldiers speak in an accented deep voice and the girls almost gag.

El is the first to greet them, "Hey, you guys," she twirls a hair in her finger, giggling innocently, "we um...seem to be lost. Can you guys help us?" [Name] nods, doing what El taught her. The wind seems so strong meanwhile, and she tries to blow her hair out of her face but fails. She turns ger head to the side while El awkwarsly watches her. To their dismay, the soldiers remained stoic.

"Hello, ladies. What are you two doing out here all alone?"

"You guys are *so* interesting and funny." [Name] awkwardly and suddenly laughs out loud. She could almost hear Dustin laughing his ass off at how she's failing terribly.

Suddenly, one of the boys made a noise, and the two girls could see them looking with scared faces. Before the soldiers could turn around, El clears her throat.

"Wait! I...I--I have to tell you about this book that I've been reading. About microbiology," she glances at [Name] who is slowly panicking, "Which is one of my favorite biologies."

But the soldier remains in place, "hello, ladies. What are you two doing out here all alone?" His words are now more intimidating, and the man beside him cocks his gun and the two relesse a scared noise.

Realizing they're going nowhere with this, [Name] glances around her, and finds a radio sitting by, inhaling she murmurs to herself, "you are a *badass,*" She stands still for a moment, before the radio starts playing out of nowhere. She slowly turns to the soldiers with profound determination, "hey, you guys like to dance?"

El watches with confusion, before it dawns to her as she watches [Name] walk over to the soldiers with a sultry sway of her hips and inviting eyes. Her shoulders walk along the beat of her hips, and she walks over to the tallest soldier, remaining eye contact as she runs a hand on his shoulder, circling around him as the man watches.

[Name] runs her fingers over the other soldier as she passes, before

finally settling in front of the first soldier, her hands on his chest as she gazes into his dark eyes. She swings her hips in an alluring manner and El glances at behind them to check if the rest are seeing this.

The other man throws his gun away as [Name] slowly moves her shoulders to the song, her hands on the man's face as she dances to the slow beat of the song. A noise of a door breaking open snaps their attention, but the girl only reaches for the other man's face and turns his head to her, almost gagging as the soldier places a hand on her hips as she twirls around in his arms.

She harshly pulls his face to her, her body crurved as her leg stretch out and her head thrown back, showing her upper chest and neck with her eyes closed. Inside her head, she's praying that *for the love of God*, Will and the rest are almost done.

From the inside of the transporation shed, Dustin and Lucas are watching, the two at awe, and somehow weirded out, "right...her strength is dance fighting."

"Mike, what do you think? What's the move?" Will whispers hurriedly to Mike who is somewhat hyperventilating at the sudden pressure.

"What?"

"What do we take?" Will presses to a Mike who's breathing heavily. He frowns at his friend's sudden reaction.

"Which one? I don't...I don't know, man, okay?" Mike stutters as he looks around, his face in a terrified frown and Will walks closer to him.

"Mike, come on."

Suddenly, Lucas knocked over a motorcycle, which then created a domino effect as it crashed on a row of parked motorcycles. Everyone watches with wide eyes while Lucas curses.

Outside, everyone hears the commotion, and [Name] decided there was no other choice. With her back lightly pressed against the soldier, she snaps her head back to headbutt him. The soldier cry out in pain while [Name] kicks the other soldier in his crotch before punching him straight in the face. El releases an amazed laugh, feet planted on the floor as [Name] grabbed the man by the neck, swinging her body around to deliver a flying kick on the first soldier she headbutt.

[Name] grabs his head and knees him in the stomach, craning her neck around her to elbow the other man, before pulling his head on her arm as she kicks his face with the heel of her feet. Using him as support, she delivers another kick to the other soldier, both her feet

hitting his face and he falls to the ground.

"She's kicking their ass!" Dustin shouts gleefully as they watch [Name] hit a soldier with a chair, knocking him back to the ground, "That's our [Name]!"

"She is destroying them." Lucas comments as the girl evades the punches one of the soldiers delivers, before giving her own barrades of attacks in his mid section before finishing with a hard punch to the face that sent him flying into the wooden pole as he collapses.

[Name] is then grabbed by a man behind, but she uses it to support her weight to kick one of them, before headbutting the one who grabbed her and breaking free. She elbows him, before dropping to the ground and getting inbetween and behind the man's open legs, before kicking him straight in the butt.

She hears a door open, but focuses on the men as she sends both a split kick to their faces, her body on mid-air for a second before landing on the ground panting, with El behind her cheering. [Name] looks over the shed and sees Will watching with a surprised look. He gives a thumbs up awkwardly. She smiles.

"You go, girl!" El shouts as she claps, jumping in excitement. It's like a whole action movie right in front of her eyes.

One of the soldiers stands again, grabbing her body and pushing her to a wooden pole, but she grabs the lamp hanging by and smashes it on his head. The soldier lunges at her again with a punch, but she receives his knuckles and twists it around behind his back, spraining the joint as he screams in pain. Not satisfied, she pushes his body to a table and knocks him unconscious.

[Name] runs to the final soldier who's just about to stand, jumping over his stomach before swinging her legs around his neck, elbowing him on the head as he twists her around. But she doesn't let go, and he instead falls on the ground, before [Name] finally punches him harshly, and the back of his head bounces on the ground as he is knocked unconscious.

Panting, she looks up, finding El laughing and watching in amazement with water in her hand, "You're my hero." She giggles as the two girls meet in a side hug, with El giving [Name] the water.

When they arrive inside the shed, Lucas and Dustin are cheering with Will who iscsilent with a somewhat proud and amazed smile, "You should give me lessons in kicking ass." Dustin laughs as they high five.

"As great of a moment that is, we ain't got the time for it anymore." Lucas glances at the window, hearing motorcycle engines revving as he turns to everyone.

"Mike! We got to fly, now!" El runs to her boyfriend who is still stuttering in panic.

"Nope. I can't do it. Maybe we should take the school bus." He shakes his head vigorously.

"What? We can't outrun them monsters in that little damn bus." Lucas fights back.

"No, I can't do it, okay?! I've never piloted a plane before!"

[Name] walks to him, grabbing him by the shoulders, "and I've never fought people before. Mike, *this* is where we need you." She encourages the boy who is listening with wide eyes.

"Remember, you're the missing piece." El continues, and Mike gulps before nodding.

"A..alright," everyone smiles in relief as Mike continues nodding with a determined smile of his own, "Seaplane McDonough, reporting for duty," he pulls out sunglasses out of nowhere and everyone looks at him with a weirded out expression, "Let's go, people."

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9. Chapter 9

Notes for the Chapter:

> A/N: Hey u guys!! We're one chapter away from the epilogue!! This story has been fun, and it'll sadly come to an end. I might do the sequel of Jumanji: The Next Level, but for now, I'll be focusing more on my Dreamwalker story. I hope you guys enjoy this!!

THE JAGUAR.

As everyone releases joyous laughter, [Name] couldn't help but feel anxiousness crawling back into her core. Her [e/c] eyes glances down towards the backdrop, and she releasea a shriek of surprise, "oh my God!" They're way high up in the air now, their enemies as small as a peck of ants.

Will beside her sought out her hand, their eyes meeting as he smiles, "we're gonna be okay!" He gives her a smile, but right as he said it, Mike screams.

"What in the *fuck*!"

"What's wrong?!" Dustin, who's beside him cries out as his grip on the handle support tightens. [Name] and Will glance back at each in fear.

"You said we were going to be okay!"

"I'm sorry, I lied!"

Everyone starts to scream in panic, the loud blasts of grenade launchers going after the helicopter. The helicopter engine is revving against their ears, and they all continue to panic in fear.

"Something's broken!" Mike shouts as he tries to pull the driving handle.

"*Obviously*!" Lucas screams as the wings of the helicopter cuts through numerous trees as it flies forwards in a unstable manner. The helicopter swings as it hits a tall tree, the aircraft turning around as everyone screams. Will's hold on [Name] tightens.

"Hang on!"

"Oh, my God, we're about to die!" Dustin cries, actual tears falling down his face as he tries to grasp on anything to keep stable.

"*Oh, my God*!" El screams as the helicopter starts to fall in circles.

"It won't go up!" Mike continues as the helicopter continues to fall. His hand is on the collective, trying to desperately get it to work, to

no avail.

"*What*? What do you mean?!" [Name] shouts.

"The collective is busted! It controls the plate up there, which tilts the rotors and controls the pitch. It's how we go up and down!" The helicopter continues to fall, and Lucas starts to say his prayers as everyone tries to get ahold of something stable, their heads spinning the same as the aircraft does. Finally, before the aircraft falls straight into the rocky land, Mike manages to get it stable enough. But the bottom of the helicopter continues to graze and break under the pressure.

Suddenly, something loud and fast approaching catches everyone's attention. It's a series of heavy and thunderous footsteps, and Lucas' eyes widens.

"Albino rhinos! They're indigenous to Jumanji. They're huge, white, scary, and stupid and they eat people." He exclaims, and everyone turns to him before a new set of panic settles in everyone's stomach.

"They're getting close!"

The loud groaning of the rhinos echoes in their ears, their large stature busting through rock formations like it's nothing. They're coming to them in all angles, and everyone gulps as fear envelop them.

"My stomach's starting to bother me a little bit..." Dustin says lowly, gagging a bit. Mike screams at him to get it together.

"Go up, Mike!" El shouts as she glances to the back of the aircraft, seeing numerous albino rhinos getting closer and closer.

But Mike cries back in exasperation, "I can't go up!"

"Well, what the hell are we gonna do?!" Lucas cries from beside [Name] and Will pants as he ponders their choices. He turns to [Name].

"I'm about to do something very stupid."

"Wait, what?" The girl replies in a daze but Will ignores her as he turns to Mike with a determined expression.

"I'll fix the helicopter, Mike."

[Name]'s eyes widens as she gasps, "No!"

"*Yes*!" Both Mike and Dustin cry out.

Will nods as he lets go of [Name]'s hand, getting ready to unbuckle his seat bealt, "Tell me what to do."

"*Will*!" The girl reaches for him, but he's already out of his seat in a wobbly manner. He gives her a reassuring smile and Lucas continues to cry beside her while El watches the albino rhinos gain speed.

"Be careful, Will!" She bids the boy, who nods.

"You gotta connect the flight-control rod to the mesh plate under the rotors." Mike advises the now standing boy who continues to mutter what he's been told.

"Flight-control rod, mesh plate, under the rotors."

[Name] feels fear grab her heart and she cries out, "Wait, what?!"

"I'll be right back." Will calls out as he grabs the hood of the helicopter, getting ready to get over the aircraft. El closes her eyes in fear, not wanting to see anything go wrong.

"Will, where are you going?!" [Name] shrieks as she watches the boy climb up, "be careful!" She adds, nervously fidgeting as she tries to calm herself. If she can beat those guys, if Mike can fly this helicopter, then Will can fix this problem. She breathes in a pattern to controls her nerves.

"Hurry up!" Lucas shouts for Will.

Will feels adrenaline coursing through his veins, his hands gripping the roof as he looks at the complicated roof of the helicopter, "All right, just gonna stand on this thingy, pull myself up towards these deadly helicopter blades. Okay..." his eyes trail on the parts, "there's the mesh plate. Here's that rod thingy..."

A rhino smashes it's horn on the back of the helicopter, and everyone releases a scream as the aircraft goes sideways while Will loses his footing. His lower body almost flies off, but his grip on the roof of the helicopter kept him steady as he screams with everyone.

"*Will*!" Everyone cries out for the boy. [Name] reaches for him, but he manages to balance himself as the rhinos continue to hit and wreak havoc behind the aircraft.

"Speed it up, Mike!" Dustin cries as another rhino smashes beside the helicopter. El screams.

"Hurry! Come on, fix it!" Mike shouts for Will.

Mike and Dustin both release a shaky breath, their eyes landing on the end of the revene. *It's a dead end*. They need to go up, "Oh, my God..."

"Running out of time, Will!" Lucas shouts as everyone else notices the end of the revene. El feels her soul leave her body.

"Fix it, please!"

"No, no, no...." Dustin chants as the dead end gets nearer, the loud pounding of footsteps by the rhino ringing against his ears as he closes his eyes tightly, chanting still.

But Will's affirmation causes a string of cheers as [Name] releases a shaky breath of relief, "Got it!" The helicopter finally flies up, and everyone laughs in relief while Will finally heads inside the aircraft.

He is immediately engulfed by a hug, "We made it! You did it!" [Name] laughs, the fear and worry gripping her heart finally dispersing as Will holds unto her.

"I thought we were gonna die." El and Dustin echoes, and the latter releases a loud cheer as he raises a fist.

"Yes! Nice, Will!" Mike congratulates the panting boy who finally left [Name]'s arms. Will smiles.

"Thank you."

El laughs with everyone, "That was scary."

Amidst the relief and cheering, everyone's attention turns to a sheepish and fear stricken Lucas, "uh..."

El's smiles slowly diminishes, "What?"

Lucas gulps as his eyes meet everyone else's, "I dropped the jewel."

"What?"

"You dropped the jewel?"

The boy gulps, stammering as he gestures towards his other end. Everyone looks over to him in disbelief and shock, and he rubs his hands together sheepishly.

"I leaned over, thought I had to puke and I didn't. And...it came out of my backpack--"

"Oh my God..."

"We need that jewel!" El exclaims while Lucas smiles in a sheepish manner.

"I know."

"So we're in a pickle," Dustin panics all over again, "*We're in a pickle*!"

[Name] whimpers as she holds her face in her gloved hands,

adrenaline wearing off as she sports a major headache. Plus that fact that Lucas dropped the jewel. She calms herself down.

"Mike, turn around. We have to go back and get it." Will advises his friend who didn't hesitate to turn the helicopter around. Lucas gulps, nodding.

"Just look for it, that's right. Everybody open your eyes. Let's all look for it as a group." Lucas rambles on guiltily, as everyone roams their eyes all over the ground on which they last were. Dustin's eyes widens.

"There! I see it!" He points at the bright green gem, and everyone releases a sigh of relief as Mike slowly lowers the aircraft. [Name] frowns as the group of albino rhinos circling the gem.

"What are they doing?"

El releases a breath, "It's like they're protecting it or something..."

Lucas slowly gets out of his seat, hands gripping the supports as he asks, "How we gonna do this?"

"I don't know." Will replies, eyes on the gem as he thinks.

"Well, you gotta go get it, right, bud? What do you need? Your boomerang? Uh...maybe--maybe some scissors? A pipe wrench? Some

shoelaces? I'm your valet. Whatever you need, I can get it for you," Lucas smiles awkwardly at Wil, obviously guilty and wanting to help, "just say the word."

Will gulps as his eyes travel to the number of lives tattooed on the wrist of Lucas. He mentally prepares for Lucas' wrath as he swallows down the fear. He's gonna be *so dead*.

"I'm so sorry, Lucas." He says shakily, as if on the verge of crying.

Lucas looks confused, "Sorry for what?"

And right as the words left his mouth, Will pushed the boy down unto the ground, his back falling first as he screams, "No!"

"Will! Why did you do that?!" Everyone screams in surprise as Lucas groans, standing. His eyes widens as the rhinos set their eyes on him, and with a scream, he runs.

"*I'm gonna fucking kill you, Will*!"

Will gulps "I'm sorry! I needed a distraction! Mike, turn us around."

Mike nods his head, doing what he's told as he turns the helicopter, closing in on the gem. Will drops down, immediately grabbing the gem and throwing it to [Name], who catches it with ease.

"No! Help! Help! Stop!" El watches as Lucas continues to scream, and she releases a gasp as Lucas continues to get trampled on by the rhinos.

"Lucas!"

Will winces, but ultimately advises Mike, "Mike, get ready to roll us to the side." His eyes wander to the skies as the boy looks at him with surprise.

"What?"

"When I tell you, roll 90 degrees to the right," he says, getting ready as [Name], El and Dustin look over at each other with confusion. But when a familiar technical dings, realization dawns on them, "*Now*!"

Right as he shouts, the helicopter is turned to the side, the open door leaning towards a falling Lucas who continues to scream. El tightly closes her eyes in fear.

But Will manages to catch a screaming Lucas, whom he immediately pulls inside, "You pushed me out the helicopter, *asshole*!"

"I know, I'm sorry!"

Everyone releases a breath of relief as Mike chuckles, flying the helicopter out and away.

The helicopter lands on plain fields, the engine turning off as the teens inside release a string of relieved noises. El is the first out, followed by [Name] and then the boys. Lucas was sulking the entire ride, obviously pissed off at Will, who smiles at him awkwardly whilst apologizing.

But in the end, Lucas knows he did it for a reason and that in the end, it was still his fault for being careless, "alright, asshole. I forgive you." The two smiles at each other with a fist bump.

"You are a killer pilot, Mike!" El exclaims as she showers her boyfriend with kisses, the pair laughing in joy while Dustin gags.

"And you too, Will, you were so fucking cool, man!" Dustin pulls the embarrassed boy in a side hug, who laughs lightly in reply.

"Thank you body." He pats himself, and the two laughs. Will then pointd at Mike, "but no, really, it was Mike who was amazing." He grins and [Name] shakes her head with a smile.

"No, no, no, *you* were the cool one, bro." Mike pats him in the shoulder.

"You were jumping out a helicopter and was fixing a helicopter while on air!" Dustin exclaims with so much emotion and everyone laughs.

"Yeah, but you *literally* just flew a helicopter, Mike. That was so cool!" Will high fives with him and El and [Name] rolls their eyes teasingly at the boys.

But Mike laughs, "No, no, no--"

"Excuse me!"

[Name] and El turns to a pissed off Lucas.

"*Excuse me*!" By his second shout, chatter dies down, and everyone finally turns to him with either confused or surprised expressions, "I'm the one that was a human sacrifice. You don't know what's on the underside of those rhinos," El scrunches her nose in disgust, "and you don't wanna know. I've seen a lot of things. Felt them on my face too," he gestures to his face, looking like he's about to cry, "things that I will *never* be able to erase from my memory."

But instead of showing sympathy, the others couldn't help but stifle laughter at how he looks like saying those words, and how funny it just was.

And Lucas was not amused, "*Oh*, that's funny to you guys. Go ahead. Laugh it all out." He purses his lips while his hands settle on his hips. Dustin bursts out in laughter, with Mike and El following. The other two felt too bad that they continue to keep their laughters in.

Mike finally settles down, "okay, okay, let's all just calm do--" feeling like something started to itch on his neck, his hand immediately shoots up to slap it. Everyone now turns to Mike, who gulps as he stares down at his hand. *We just can't get a break, can we*?

"*Oh, shit*...mosquito." His body falls to the floor.

El releases a gasp, scrambling to run to Mike as [Name] places a hand on her mouth, shocked.

"No, no, no! Mike, *no, no, no, no, no*!" El gently settles his head on her lap, tears blurring her vision as his friends run over to them, panicking and afraid.

This can't be it...

[Name] breathes out shakily, watching as Mike continues to have a hard time breathing.

"Mike, *Mike*, no." Will gently slaps his friend's face, hoping to get him to stay awake. Everyone is now anxiously panicking, their hearts pounding as they watch Mike slowly lose consciousness.

"Mike, talk to me. Wake up." El evenly says, trying not to sound too panicky so that Mike wouldn't panic as well. She swallows down her whimpers, "*Mike*?"

"Mike?!" Dustin shouts for him, turning to everyone with a fearful face, "he's dying." He says with a whimper and Lucas' face falls on his hands.

El looks at Dustin desperately, then at [Name], "*no*! We can't let him die! Please, somebody!" Her tears are now freely falling down her cheeks as she sobs, gripping unto Mike's collar as Will wordlessly watches in shock. But he looks around in daze, also desperate to keep Mike alive.

"Does anyone know how to do CPR?"

[Name] immediately snaps her head to Will, "I do." She says determinedly, and El releases a somewhat relieved breath as she pushes Dustin and Lucas away for [Name].

"Please, [Name]."

The girl immediately drops beside an unconscious Mike, breathing deeply as she tries to remember what she was taught of back in middle school. She was only able to use it once--on her friend, Auggie.

"Okay...three chest compressions, and mouth-to-mouth. Okay, [Name], you can do this." Giving herself a quick peptalk, her hands start to move over Mike's chest, pushing lightly whilst counting in her head. *One, two, three...*

Inhaling deeply, she pinches his nose, before connecting their mouths. *One breath, two breaths...*

Pulling away, she does everything on repeat, her mind swirling with the voice of her teacher instructing her how to do CPR. Within minutes, she feels Mike's pulse. Her eyes widens.

"Wait, *wait* [Name], stop. Your tattoo." Dustin speaks up, and the girl looks over her wrist as she notices her second life line fading.

Lucas' eyebrows furrown, "It looks like you're giving him one of your lives." Will looks worried, but the girl only smiles.

"I'm okay with that."

"What if you need it for yourself?" Will asks outloud, but [Name] shakes her head.

"It's okay. I'll be okay and Mike will be okay."

As if intantly, Mike starts to cough, and El cries out in joy, pulling her boyfriend in a tight embrace as he groans, "what happened?"

Dustin and Lucas release breaths of relief, patting the girl on the shoulder as she smiles. She looks up to Will, who also look relieved but also worried. She smiles to him reassuringly.

"Mike." El whispers, kissing the side of his mouth as he looks at everyone in confusion, "[Name] gave you one of her lives," El says, before turning to the girl and giving her a hug as well, "thank you so much."

[Name] chuckles out, "no problem."

"[Name], you okay?" Will asks her in slight worry and she nods.

"I think so."

Mike turns to the girl with a grateful look, "thank you. *Really*." He holds out his fist and [Name] laughs as they fist bump.

"Anything for a friend."

Will found himself a little deeper into the forest as he searches for a clean body of water to fill their bottles up with. As he stops for a moment, he couldn't help but think back on what happened for the past...*hours*? Days? He wasn't quite sure as everything starts to blur in his head.

[Name] giving her life seems risky, and although he's glad that Mike is alive and well, he couldn't help but worry for the girl. He didn't know when exactly this whole emotional rollercoaster started, especially whenever the girl's involved, but honestly speaking, he didn't mind it one bit.

"Hey."

A familiar voice snaps him out of his daze, he blinks in surprise to find [Name] standing by idly with a small smile. He couldn't help the smile that pulls at his lips.

"Hey." He replies, watching as the girl shuffles in her feet.

"What are you doing?"

"I uh...just filling these up." He holds out the flasks in his hand, and she nods as she walks closer to him.

"Okay, cool. Mind if I help?"

"No."

As the two start to walk in silence, Will releases a sigh, "look, uh...earlier with Mike--"

The girl chuckles before he can finish, "Will," he searches her eyes, finding light amusement dancing within the [e/c] hues, "it's alright. I'm pretty sure I'll be okay. I have you guys."

"I--I know...I was just...worried. I mean, it's unpredictable out here. But you're right, we got your back. I got you." He unconsciously adds the last part, watching as her eyes glance back up to him. Her smiles widens.

"That's really good to know." She lightly bumps his shoulder as they continue forward, and Will couldn't help the grin that stretches in his lips. This feels nice, he notes. Whenever he's with her, he feels so comfortable and happy.

He hopes she feels the same way.

Another set of quick footsteps reach their ears, and the two turn to their back to see Lucas scrambling to them, "guys! We found the Jaguar."

"Now, that's good news." [Name] breathes out with a smile as her eyes meets with Will's. The two follow after Lucas.

"There it is." Lucas drones in wonder, his eyes settling on the mountain rock shaped like a jaguar, moss and other plantation covering it from head to toe.

"There it is..." Mike echoes after, his lip quirking up.

"We'd better get going." Will announces and everyone immediately follows, still amazed at the piece of landmark standing infront of their eyes. Dustin shivers at a noise of a bird squawking.

The six trudge forward, careful in their steps because of the rocky land. Their conversations consist of the food they're going to eat once they're out and a whole lot of horror films they'd love to watch.

It felt like a normal hitchhike, if not for the sun setting and the eerie feeling of being in an unfamiliar land. [Name] slowly finds herself closer to Will, finding him a better walking partner with how secure she feels around him. Their fingers brush against each other and she couldn't help the blush crawling on her face. She decides not to look at him.

"I think we just follow this path." Dustin says as he holds the map in front of him, carefully walking forward. The sun has finally set, the blue ambiance of the night filling their vision as they head inside a small clearing. Suddenly, lightning and thunder start to strike, the sudden cold nippimg at their exposed skin. [Name] tightens the thin button up Dustin had lent her around her body, creeped out at where they are.

Their eyes settle on a pathway, surrounded by trees and vines crawling along the branches. Just infront of the pathway is a stone statue of a snake.

"No. It can't be that easy." Mike says, and everybody looks around warily.

Dustin notices the ink appearing on the paper, "The Defenders. What does that mean?" Their area is called The Defenders, and somehow, [Name] did not like the sound of that.

Will swallows his fear, "There's only one way to find out. Lucas, give me the jewel."

The boy didn't hesitate to bring out the jewel, and everyone gasps as the torches starts to be lit on fire. They walk closer to each other. The torches line up straight on both sides of the pathway, and Dustin gulps as they hear the familiar drums echoing.

"Something's about to happen." [Name] murmurs as she looks straight ahead.

"I hate those drums." Dustin whispers angrily at the echoing of drums.

Everyone is silent as Will trudges forward. [Name] immediately holds unto his arm to stop him, "What, you're just gonna walk in there?" She frowns at him. But Will shakes his head.

"No. That's what the game wants us to do," he looks down to her, then at everyone, "follow the path. It's a trap." He says and realization dawns on his friends. The statement alone brings more fear in their guts.

But Dustin's eye caught sight of a familiar statue, his eyes squinting as he tries to remember where he saw that elephant statue sitting a couple of feet from where they are. His expression quickly turns into shock, "*When you see the elephant, begin the climb*."

Everyone's eyes follow Dustin as he walks over to the familiar piece of statue, their expression mirroring his as Lucas points out its the elephant they got from the bazaar. Will turns to Dustin with slight anxiousness, but fear continue to poke at his chest.

"I'll go through the trees." He nods his head.

El tilts her head "The trees?"

"Yeah."

"Do you think that's what that means?" Mike follows.

Will slowly shrugs his shoulder, "Maybe? I mean, that must be it. Begin the climb? There's nothing else here to climb."

"That's the move. This is the final level of the game." Lucas says in realization, and his friends turn to him with a hint of surprise. *Final level?*

"Yeah, and I'm pretty sure this is a Bravestone thing." Will nods to himself, before walking forwards to the nearest tree. Dustin tilts his head.

"Did he just refer to himself in the third person?"

[Name] shakes her head, "fourth person, I think."

Everyone watches as Will climbs the tree expertly, his feet and arms moving in pace as he traverses the high branches of the tree. Mike looks so weirded out, "how the hell does he do that?"

"Climbing is one of his strengths, remember?" El answers as she watch in amazement.

As the boy continue to climb, he doesn't notice the squirrel casually munching on a nut. When his eyes met its small, beady ones, the pair release a shriek, causing him to lose his grip and fall down.

Thankfully, the boy lands just a couple of distances from them, and everyone shouts for him as he stands, groaning, "*never again...*"

As he walks over to everyone, Dustin pats him in the back, "you

tried."

Right as he utters those words, a string of low growling reaches their ears, and the groupd slowly bunch together as they turns their head to the pathway, seeing a large animal slowly moving towards them.

"Oh, my God, you guys. *Panthers*." Mike shakily says as he holds unto El, who looks at him with a small tilt of her head.

"No. Those are jaguars." Lucas corrects Mike fearfully, and Will turns to everyone.

"You guys, I...I don't think I can do this." He gulps as he avoids everyone's gaze, now unable the fear gripping at his gut as he realizes they might actually die in this game. But his friends refuse to back down.

"What are you talking about?" Mike hisses at him, also scared as he looks around if the jaguars are any near.

"This game--it's *unpredictable*! What if we die out there? Most of us here only have *one* life." He gestures to Mike, El, Lucas and [Name], breathing heavily as he shakes his head.

"What do you mean, Will? That's how it usually is. We only have one life." [Name] softly says, a hand on Will's arm to help him calm down. The boy is obviously on the verge of breaking down.

"That's right, man. It's on how we live the life that we have. Look, we literally just saw you hanging out from a helicopter. You can't back down now, now that we're this close to going home." Lucas follows with, his eyes connecting with Will's bleary ones.

The boys sighs, "sorry...I just--this is really hard."

El smiles to him reassuringly, "hey, it's alright. You got us."

Dustin nods, "yeah, we can do this, man. *Together*." He grins to Will, who couldn't help but smile. As long as he has his friends. Everyone.

"Together." He nods his head, breathing in deeply as he gathers himself.

[Name] smiles along with everyone, "Together."

"All right, let's do this."

As everyone gathers their bearings, motorcycle engines sound from a close distance.

10. Chapter 10

THE FINAL LEVEL.

"Here's what we're gonna do," Lucas swallows for a moment, before he starts gesturing with his hands, "I—I saw this one the TV once, but I think it'll work great!" Mike winces at that while Dustin whimpers, "we're gonna fan out and run a play that I saw was called: The Double Reverse Refrigerator. Some famous football guy did it—" El groans for him to get right to the point as the men in motorcycles continue to approach where they stand, "Dustin, you go up the left side. I'll go up the right," Lucas gestures to where he's talking about, while the rest listens, "Mike and El, you'll draw the defense, so Will can go up the middle."

At the absence of her name, the [h/c] girl frowns, "what about me? I'll go with Will." She gestures to the boy whose cheeks flushes a faint pink. But Lucas shakes his head.

"No. There's *something else*....we need you to do."

As Lucas' eyes motions to the oncoming men, [Name]'s face dawns with realization and she nods. As everyone fans out to their respective places for their roles, Will stumbles for a moment, before looking back to the girl.

"You be careful."

[Name] gives her a faint smile. When everyone's gone, she looks over to the radio conveniently placed on an upturned rock, and she smirks as the men unmount their motorcycles, cracking their knuckles.

"You guys like to dance?"

"Hey! Over here! Come and get us!" Mike and El release laughter, the men after them either takes off after with their motorcycles or by foot. Mike found himself feeling the adrenaline coursing through his veins, the sudden knowledge of his mastery of physical defense and offense causing his heart to hammer.

Dustin continues onward, trying to avoid getting his pathway tangled with everyone in the crossfire since his character does not enable him to fight back. As he releases pants and wheezes, his heart continue to pound against his chest as fear continue to overtake his form.

Lucas, meanwhile, found himself trying to find a way up the statue. The jewel hangs heavy on his pocket, and his palms sudden turn clammy as he grips the torch tightly. The jungle continued to remain dark despite the light, and he now and then glances behind him incase somebody had followed him. When he looks forward the fourth time, he almost stumbles as his eyes land on the large creature

running towards him.

He releases a whimper as he clutches on the torch, "Oh, man...okay...." he knees are wobbly, his chest now pounding so hard and loud that he wonders when his ears will burst, "*stop*!"

The elephant shokingly listens, and it gazes into his own dark brown eyes, as he swallows shakily. Lucas slowly holds out his hands, an indication that he holds no animosity and does not plan on attacking the creature, "It's the elephant and the mouse...." he titters, mostly to himself, before gulping again, sweat trickling down his temple, "w—what's up? Mouse Finbar, zoologist."

He slowly nods his head as the elephant continue to remain silent unsurprisingly, "*zoologist* and...and backpack guy."

He feels his knees almost give out at the silence.

On the other end of Will, he managed to steal a motorcycle from one of the goons he managed to knock unconscious. He remains with his eyes trained ahead, heart beating so fast as he tries to reassure himself in his mind.

As he gazes up to the Jaguar statue, he swallows down his apprehensiveness and fear before speeding more just below and near the statue. But his eyes widens as he sees what's infront of him.

"Give me the jewel or your friend dies."

Van Pelt glares maliciously at Will, the white in his eyes almost distracting as the brown haired boy stops the motorcycle. His eyebrows furrow against each other as he unmounts the vehicle.

"Don't give it to him!" Dustin cries out with his eyes closed as the gun pressed against his temple buries painfully on it.

"Quiet!"

"Stop!" [Name], Mike and El arrive, worry and fear evident on their faces as relief flashes in Dustin's. So is Will, the weight of his chest lessening as he meets [Name]'s eyes.

But the three takes careful steps back as they notice the jaguars squaring up on them, growling lowly.

"Take me instead, okay?" Will says, and his friends all to turn with surprised frowns on their faces. He glances fearfully at the jaguars.

But Van Pelt only deepens his glare as well as the gun on Dustin's head, making the poor boy hiss, "Give me the jewel." His voice is now lower, darker, and the three watches hopelessly as Dustin shakes under Van Pelt's hold.

"I...can't do that." Will holds a hand out to stop the mad man who only ignores him with dark eyes.

"Five,"

Everyone is now turning to each other with desperation, and El releases a noise akin to a whimper as Van Pelt loads the gun, "*Four*,"

"I can't give you the jewel." Will says again in a level voice, but just like the first time, the enemy just presses deeper on Dustin's head.

"Three,"

"*Will*," [Name] looks over in Will's bright eyes, and her eyes hold a desperate gleam to them as Mike grits his teeth in anger.

"Two—!"

"Because I don't have it!"

Just as his words leave his mouth, thundering footsteps resounded across the jungle, and everyone links closer together with fear as the trees and the ground continue to shake and break. With wide eyes, [Name] releases a shriek as a large elephant appears out of nowhere, and on top of it sat Lucas with a wide smile.

"Zoology, bitch!"

Van Pelt releases an angered shout as Lucas holds up the gleaming green gem, and his friends all simultaneously release either relieved laughter or sighs as Lucas gets himself ready to throw the gem up to where the statue is perched. Van Pelt watches with wide eyes.

"No, no, no!"

The jaguars simultaneously pounces on the elephant, and Lucas shouts in surprise as the larger animal retirees by throwing the predators with its huge husks.

"Son of a bitch!" Dustin elbows Van Pelt in the stomach, and the man grunts in pain as Dustin stomps on his foot, breaking free. Not satisfied enough, he knocks the gun out of Van Pelt's hand before socking him straight in the nose.

"Go, Dustin!" El cheers while [Name] and Will exchanges looks.

"Elephant." She breathlessly says with a dazed smile while Will's eyes widen for a fraction as realization wraps itself around him.

"*Begin the climb*..." at his words, the two turns to Mike, El and Dustin.

"Leave him alone!" Mike exclaims to Van Pelt who's going after Dustin again.

"Get up there and I'll get the jewel to you." Will grabs [Name] by the shoulders as Lucas shrieks on top of the still fighting elephant. Th girl shakes his head.

"No, I can't, I've only got one life, Will." At her fearful words, the boy shakily exhales.

"Okay...I'll get it to you."

[Name] nods, gulping as his heart continue to plund with unrelenting fear and adrenaline, "Okay, okay...be careful."

"You too, now go, [Name]!"

As the two broke off, the girl takes Will's motorcycle, not really knowing how to drive it, but trusting her character's instincts. She speeds away as Mike, El and Dustin try to disarm Van Pelt.

"Mike!" El shouts for her boyfriend who rolls on the ground, clutching his pained stomach after being kicked harshly by Van Pelt. Dustin slams into the man, but he only stumbles back before elbowing the boy on the back, then throwing him to the side.

Before El could attack him, Lucas and his elephant rushes in the middle, shrieking as they throw the last jaguar off of them. When the large animal passes, El's eyes widens to find Van Pelt gone.

Will managed to climb to where the gem was thrown by Lucas, heaving in exhaustion as he clutches onto the ground. He stumbles for a moment when he arises, but his eyes ultimately widens to see a cluster to snakes surrounding the gem.

Slowly treading through the thousands of snake hissing and crawling on the ground, he swallows his nervousness and fear, but ultimately ignore it when his fingers grasps the smooth and jagged surface of the bright gem. A smile graces his features, but it falter when he hears a familiar voice.

"I'll take that."

Van Pelt appears behind him when Will turned, and both their gazes narrow at each other as Will clutches the gem tighter.

"Game over." Van Pelt smirks, lips curled devious as Will glances below him. Getting a sudden idea, he let a smile draw itself on his face as mischief dances in his eyes.

"I don't think so."

Stepping on the snakes, Van Pelt watches sin surprise as the hundreds of calm snakes bit every available skin on Will's legs, now angered. The boy releases a pained wince, but it goes numb as his body evaporates into nothing.

As this occurs, [Name] continues to drive forward, the rocky patches on the ground proven to be difficult to bypass as she grimances. She didn't know how to climb, and so, taking the motorcycle, she hoped her chances will be bigger.

Hope surges on her chest as she continues to speed forwards, the air blasting on her ears as she continues to go nearer and up where the jewel in meant to be placed.

When her motorcycle finally reaches the shoulders of the Jaguar Statue, she scrambles in her mind a plan on how to perch herself on top of the head. Her eyes travel to where she'll have to jump off, her hand grasping the rope and hook hanging on her shorts.

Without wasting any time, she throws it expertly and it lands on a jagged part of the head. Taking a deep breath, her eyes almost bulges out of its sockets as everything plays in slow motion. The motorcycle speeds off the statue, and she releases a gasp as her hand that's connected to the rope tightens, her body swinging off and on top of the head.

With wobbly feet, she lands right on top of it, and cranes her neck up to see a falling Will. Her eyes widens, but seeing the gleaming gem on his hand, he gets ready to grab his arm so she could pull him up next to her.

As Will's body continue to fall, everything is almost in slow motion as their eyes meet—[Name] looking nervous and worried while Will looks to be more of relief and a hint of apprehension.

But when her hands made contact with his wrist that's holding the gem, his fall is momentarily cut short as [Name] grunts, her feet planted firmly on the ground as she bites her lower lip.

"Come on, Will!"

With great effort, the boy uses his legs to get himself on top of the even ground [Name] is slowly sliding off. But when his feet is finally planted, he did not hesitate to slam the jewel on where it's supposed to be placed. His ears continue to ring and the two of them pants as they hear their friends cheering along with the shout of Van Pelt's anguish.

"*Yes*!" [Name] feels a rush of relief grow on her chest as she turns to Will, engulfing him in a tight hug which he reciprocated. But they also immediately pull away when they realized that nothing has happened.

"Uh...?"

"*Call out its name!"* They hear a faint shout coming from below, and the two turns their eyes to their four friends who are shouting.

"Call out its name!"

"Call out its name, everyone!"

"Oh!"

Without a second to waste, everyone shouts in chorus.

"*Jumanji*!"

In a flash, they feel their body being lifted.

When everyone opened their eyes, bright green plants and blue skies are what greeted them.

Will turns his head to his left, seeing Mike, Dustin and El hugging one another while Lucas jumps up and down, cheering.

"I think we did it! I think we won!"

From his right, [Name] chuckles breathlessly, "I think we did."

When Will and [Name]'s eyes meet, the girl bursts out in giggles, pointing at his hair, "your hair's a mess."

As Will flushes bright pink, El points at an incoming vehicle, "Guys, it's Nigel."

Everyone's finally come off their high, and they all turn to the man inside who is whistling happily before he stops in front of them. He exits his jeep with a wide smile.

"Nigel." Will greets him as Nigel nods his head cheerfully.

"Well done, intrepid adventurers. You lifted the curse! All of Jumanji thanks you," everyone high five's one another, "your work here is done. So sadly, this is where we part."

Lucas mutters a *'thank God...'*.

"Seaplane McDonough, let me shake your hand."

Nigel holds out a hand, and everyone watches as Mike almost hesitantly walks forward. But when his hand makes contact with Nigel's, he disappears into nothing. His remaining friends all shriek

and scream in surprise.

"*Mike*!"

But Nigel only turns to Dustin next, smile ever so present, "*Adieu*, Professor Oberon." Dustin did not hesitate to shake his hand, the boy shakily releasing relieved murmurs.

"Later, dudes...and dudettes." In a flash, he's gone.

"Goodbye, Ming Fleetfoot. It has been an honor."

El shakes his hand after giving a reassuring smile at the rest. And just like that, she's gone as well. [Name] feels giddiness take over her form again, and Will turns to her with a smile which she reciprocated. She notices his looked quite strained, and if her eyes weren't playing tricks on her, almost ruefully.

Nigel turns to Lucas, who stumbles forward, "I'll miss you the most, my little Mouse."

"Get me the hell out of here!" As he shakes Nigel's hand vigorously, he also evaporates into nothing.

"Farewell, Ruby Roundhouse."

Before [Name] could walk up to Nigel, Will grabs her arm. She turns to him in surprise, seeing his now apprehensive eyes.

"Wait. What if we didn't go back?" At his words, the girl's eyebrows shot up, "I just...I like being like this...." Will swallows nervously as his face turns crimson, his eyes avoiding hers, "with *you*."

At his confession, [Name] feels the wind knocked out of her lungs. But shaking off her fluttering stomach, she smiles to him with softness, cthen let's be like this...every day. Just as [Name] and Will. I quite like the Will Byers back where we from..." swallowing her nervousness, her cheeks continue to flush as Will's eyes widens at her words, "just come home, Will. With us."

With one last quaint smile, [Namep turns to Nigel and shakes his hand. In an instant, she too disappears.

Will ponders on her words, and as excitement and giddiness engulfs his heart at what she said, he realizes he sudden couldn't wait to get back home. As *Will*, and not as Bravestone.

"Dr. Bravestone." Nigel greets him with a smile, and Will nods as he finally stops in front of the man.

"Nigel, I'm ready to go home."

The last thing Will saw was Nigel's smiling face, "See you later, Bravestone."

In a flash, he too feels his body lifting and floating away in a quick second.

When Will opened his eyes, he is panting.

He lifts his eyes, then turning around him to see Mike, El, Dustin, Lucas and [Name] all sharing the same sentiment as they tried to grasp what just happened.

It feels weird, he notes. Now sitting on the floor, breathless and his heart pounding as jf he just saved...a *video game land called Jumanji*.

But he did. They all did.

And they continue to glance at each other's eyes as silence rings against their ears. Lucas is the first to break the silence.

"What in the f—"

"[*Name*]?!"

"*Mike*?!"

The six teenagers all whip their head to the stairs leading to the basement, hearing the thundering footsteps of who they guesses is the parents of their mentioned friends.

Mike's mother is the first to appear, worry on her features while [Name]'s father follows, mirroring her expression. Holly is behind them, along with a few other they couldn't quite see anymore. Mike glances at his friends for a moment before turning up to his mother.

"We're okay! Just...thought we saw a big spider!"

At his explanation, his mother sighs in relief, telling him off to keep it down next time. [Name]'s father, meanwhile, looks at his daughter with inquisitive eyes, but she only smiles to him before putting a thumbs up. Her father mirrors it, glancing to her now acquired friends before leaving. Holly just giggles as she skips away.

"Mikey's scared of spiders!"

When the voices of those that checked on them died down, all of them silences once again. That is, until [Name] started chuckling. El followed her, and in a second, the two bursts into fits of laughter that

is so contagious the rest of the boys got in on.

"Oh my God..." El wipes the tears from her eyes, before leaning against Mike who only quiets down. When El meets [Name]'s eyes, the two mirror each other's grin.

"That was...*fucking crazy*." Dustin breathes out, finally calming down as Lucas rubs his face, grinning.

"Let's all agree to never fucking do that again." Mike snorts, and Will shakes his head with a smile.

The six turn their heads to the gaming consoles, and with one final resolution, they all gaze at one another with one thing running their minds.

It's the early week of September when [Name] found herself sitting beside Will on the benches placed on random places outside the school.

It's been two weeks since what has occurred, and everyone shared the same sentiment to destroy the game. It obviously angered Mr. Dunkins, but with Dustin reassuring him it got destroyed by a random kid they let borrow it, the teacher dropped the subject.

Currently, Lucas and Mike are playing with Dustin's baseball, who is busy fixing another invention of his. El is currently with Max—the girlfriend of Lucas that [Name] finally met the day after Holly's birthday.

Max is a very lax and humorous person, and [Name] found quite the company of hers very enjoyable, especially when the three of them tease the boys behind their backs.

But the most thing that El and Max couldn't quite quit teasing [Name] for is hers and Will's growing friendship, or as El would call it—their blooming *love*. It's embarrassing enough on itself, but Will couldn't get it most of the time as it's the girl's inside joke that [Name] actually had to keep them in line in case they let something slip.

She doesn't know what she'll do if Will had to find out she likes him through those two...

Blinking her dazed [e/c] eyes, she turns to Will with a confused face. But the boy just holds a nervous smile. He's been nervous since early this morning, which made [Name]'s first day at school even more nerve wracking. What's wrong with this guy?

"You were staring daggers into Dustin. You've scared him off."

Turning to the mentioned boy, [Name] found Dustin looking at her with scared eyes, "did I do something?"

But [Name] just bursts out laughing, "oh no! I'm so sorry, Dustin. It wasn't like that! I was just thinking, is all."

Dustin releases a noise of relief, "whew, thought I was about to get my head bitten off. Anyways, shouldn't you be going home now?"

Looking at her wrist watch, the [h/c] girl releases a quiet '*oh*', before turning back to Will and Dustin, shrugging, "I think I'd spare a bit more of my time with you guys. It's boring back home."

Dustin smirks, "rather rebellious of you, miss Smartpants."

"Am not!"

Will gets in between the bickering two, sighing almost in exasperation while Lucas and Mike finally arrive near them. Before Will could say what he's about to say, Mike throws the baseball at him, which he almost fails to catch, surprise written all over his face.

When Will meets Mike's eyes, his cheeks flush as his friend motions to [Name] with his head. Lucas follows along, but just with his eyes. Will glares at them with heated cheeks.

"Oi, Dustin, I thought you were gonna show me and Lucas something?" Mike emphasized his words, and Will bites the inside of his cheek as he pleads for Lucas not to go. But his friend only sniggers behind his hand.

Dustin frowns as he looks up at Mike, "no, I don't."

Mike glares at him, "yeah, *you do.*" He gestures to [Name] and Will with pursed lips. The girl looked confused.

And apparently, so if Dustin. He stands and dusts on his pants, "what? What the hell are you on about?"

"*You slow mother...*—the one from Mr. Dunkins' class." Lucas clears his throat and Will slaps a hand on his forehead while Mike grabs Dustin by the shoulders with a tight-lipped smile.

"What's you lot got to hide about Mr. Dunkins geography class?" [Name] cuts in with crossed arms, eyebrow raised while Will turns his steaming face away. *This is a bad idea....*

Dustin finally realizes, and he nervously looks at the girl, "*oh...that.* Right, well, you wouldn't understand it. It's a boys thing."

But [Name] didn't like that, and she just huffs out, "right. Okay, you boys go do what you boys do, while I, *a girl*, do what a girl is supposed to do." Almost sneering at the weird boys, she heads back to her seat, slinging her bag over her shoulder.

With her back turned, the three are hissing under their breath as they push Dustin about, who is trying to defend himself in a harsh whisper.

"I didn't mean it like that, [Name]!"

His voice slowly fades into a distance as Lucas and Mike drag him away. [Name] just huffs out again, fixing her book before turning on her heels. What she didn't expect was Will standing behind her, fidgeting.

"*Jesus!* You scared me, Will."

"Oh, sorry. I didn't mean to." He stutters his words, and his face burns so brightly red that [Name] started to get worried. She walks over to him, placing a gently hand on his forehead.

"Seriously, you're red. Are you sick?"

As if her skin burned his, he pulls away, stammering as he tries to gather his bearings, "I'm fine!" His mind is now screaming at him to *run*, but the most of him is reassuring him that *it's now or never.*

[Name] looked quite hurt at his reaction, and she mumbles, "well...okay, if you say so. I guess I'll be going now—"

Before she can turn around, Will grasps her wrist, "no, wait. I uh...I actually wanted to speak to you." He swallows his nervousness, but it continues to crawl back up and he feels his throat almost constrict as he watches [Name] turn to him in confusion.

"Is something wrong...?"

But Will just shakes his head, and he gently lets go of her. The ground seemed much more interesting now as he scratches his nape, heart still hammering against his chest and cheeks still burning red. But when [Name] places a comforting hand on his shoulder, he finally turns to look into her captivating [e/c] eyes. Once again, he feels the wind get knocked out of his lungs as he feels himself drowning in the vibrant hues of her eyes.

"Will?"

"I...I've been wanting to tell you something ever since....I've realized it, really..." his apprehensiveness rolls off in waves, but he managed to find a sliver of courage within him as he continue to gaze into her own, "I..."

His voice dies off at the wrong time, as the girl slightly tilts her head, now pulling away from him as she gulps, "yes...?"

Will now notices the flush in her cheeks, and he wonders if she can hear the pounding of his heart, or see his urge to finally kiss her lips. At his last thought, he blinks rapidly and he blushes even deeper, "er —"

[Name] only shuffles in the soles of her shoes, her eyes glancing down to his quivering lips then up to his unfocused eyes. Her mind continue to race, and so does her heart as she hopes that Will is going to say what she thinks he will say. It's free to hope, isn't it...?

But when Will's next words finally registers in her mind, her lips fall open slightly as she looks up to him with bright eyes.

"*I like you.*"

[Name] feels her whole body melt as if it's jelly, her knees almost buckling under the sudden spout of words that she has to shuffle her feet again to keep herself upright. Her heart continue to beat erratically and she couldn't help the sudden flutter of a dozen butterflies seemingly flying inside her stomach. She feels so warm, and so...*so happy*.

"I like you too!"

They hear a squeal from somewhere, but thinking it must be just inside their heads, Will almost stumbles for a moment, and [Name] chuckles at his surprise as he tries to stand up straight, "oh...thank God."

At his words, the two couldn't help but laugh—the awkwardness that once hung in the air now disappearing as the two smiles at each other.

Will feels his inside turn fuzzy, and it feels as though he's being wrapped in a warm blanket beside the fireplace amidst a winter storm. Hearing her say those words caused an uproar in his heart, the good kind, and he had to breathe in deeply to calm his nerves as he chuckles.

"That's...really great to hear."

[Name]'s eyes twinkles under the now slowly setting sun, and she fiddles with her fingers as she smiles up to him, "yeah." The smile on their faces seems to be tattooed and Will swallows again for a moment when his eyes lands on her lips.

Without a second thought, he speaks, "well, can I um...kiss you?"

Will is surprised to hear [Name]'s embarrassed but gleeful laughter.

"*Yes*!"

Within a beat of a second, [Name] pulls him by the collar of his shirt, their lips meeting firmly and softly against each other as Will blinks in surprise for a moment. But as he slowly melts into the affection, his hands settle on her hips, slowly wrapping itself against her waist as the girl tilts her head for a better angle.

It was shortlived however, but nonetheless caused joy to erupt in

their chests as their eyes connect once again. [Name] couldn't help the grin that displayed itself on her lips, and Will once again pulls her closer to meet her lips in another kiss that she so gladly returned.

During this time, they were sure the squeals and cheers they heard wasn't inside their minds, rather, it belonged to the five people hiding a couple of distances away behind a trash bin.

Max scrunches her nose at Lucas and Dustin, "seriously? Is going inside the bin necessary? You both stink."

Notes for the Chapter:

A/N: AND LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, that is the end for this cute little story of ours :)))

But I'm so glad for everyone who stuck with me throughout this story and I hope you all loved it as much as I did! I might do a sequel with Jumaji: The Next Level, but it might take a while. Thank you again!